Fox News says $3M paid for Burnhams' release

STORY BELOW, COLUMN 1

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WAR/A4

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

1,500 Afghans killed in quakes; 4,000 hurt

KABUL—More than 1,500 people were feared dead and 4,000 injured after a series of earthquakes flattened a district capital and villages in northern Afghanistan on Monday night and Tuesday morning, government officials said.

"We are sending rescue teams but aftershocks make relief efforts danger-

1,500 AFGHANS/A4

e-mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Wednesday, March 27, 2002 ★ 50 pages / 4 sections / vol.17 / no. 109 P15 website: www.inq7.net

RP envoy asks Erap doc to do knee surgery here

By Volt Contreras

"WHY would he be concerned about my knees? That is not his job as an ambassador."

Good question from ousted President Joseph Estrada who wondered why the Philippine Ambassador to the US "had gone out of his way to convince Dr. Mow to come here."

Dr. Christopher Mow of the Stanford University Hospital is the American surgeon chosen by Joseph Estrada to perform knee replacement surgery on his severely damaged knees.

Estrada has a pending request before the Sandiganbayan to allow him to travel to the United States for his surgery. Yesterday, he claimed he was "no longer interested" in pursuing his request before the court.

Estrada disclosed yesterday that the Philippine envoy to the US, Albert del Rosario, met with Mow to persuade him to perform the surgery in the country.

And Mow appears willing to at least "explore the feasibility of doing the surgery" here provided he and his team will get ample security, will not be haled to court during their "inspection of available facilities," and if Estrada is "amenable" to such an arrangement.

Estrada said Del Rosario "had gone out of his way to convince Dr. Mow to come here."

Del Rosario, he said, even took a trip from Washington DC to personally meet Mow in San Francisco earlier this month.

Asked whether he believes Malacañang had a direct hand in Del Rosario's surpris-

RP/A14

Gloria supports Guingona stand

Manila may downgrade ties with Mexico

WAR IS TERRORISM

EDWIN BACASMAS

SETTING free the doves of peace, International Peace Mission members after a three-day fact-finding mission in Basilan hold a rally near Edwin Andrews Air Base in Zamboanga City.

By Dona Pazzibugan and Christine Herrera

THIS TIME, President Macapagal-Arroyo was not at odds with her Vice President. She fully supports the decision of Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. to recall the country's ambassador to protest the indignity he suffered in Mexico last week.

Guingona has ordered the incoming Philippine ambassador to Mexico, Justo Orros, not to proceed to his post until he gets an apology from Mexican Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda himself.

Guingona spurned the apology offered by the Mexican Embassy here.

By ordering the ambassador not to proceed to Mexico, the Philippines is downgrading its diplomatic relations with Mexico, which has been the country's trading partner since the 16th century.

"She hasn't asked Secretary Guingona to reverse that (recall) order," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

"The President supports Secretary Guingona's position and she is very confident that this diplomatic wrinkle can be settled to our satisfaction," Tiglao added.

Guingona had been at odds with the President over the RP-US Balikatan 02-1 military exercises in Mindanao. He also did not share her all-out support for the US global anti-terror campaign, having voted against the US military bases and the Visiting Forces Agreement while a senator.

The chair of the House committee on foreign affairs supported the DFA decision to downgrade the country's diplomatic mission to Mexico.

"It's not the Vice President who was insulted. It is the Republic of the Philippines," Negros Occidental Rep. Jose Apolinario Lozada Jr. told the INQUIRER.

Lozada said the Mexican snub was utter disrespect for the Philippines.

GLORIA/A4

LEONCIO BALBIN JR

BEMEDALLED from the elementary grades through high school and college, cum laude accounting graduate, Maryann Rosuman, need not look for a job. The jobs are looking for her.

Energy secretary wants to hire Maryann

By Leoncio Balbin Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

VIGAN CITY—This is one graduate who does not have to look for a job. The jobs have come looking for her.

Maryann Rosuman, the diminutive 20-year-old Ilocana who was born without legs but who graduated at the top of her class last week, has been besieged with job offers.

Among the first people was Energy Secretary Vicente Perez who wants Rosuman, an accounting graduate, cum laude, of the University of Northern Philippines (UNP) here to work in his office.

"I was struck by her (feat) after reading her story in the INQUIRER," Perez told the INQUIRER by telephone. "I was impressed by her dedication and resolve."

Perez said Rosuman's story came at the time when the energy department's financial management bureau had informed him that it was looking for new employees with an accounting background.

ENERGY/A14

Fox News says $3M paid for Burnhams' release

US defense officials, FBI keep mum

By Carlito Pablo

THE US government facilitated the payment of $3 million in ransom to the Abu Sayyaf last week for the release of American hostages Martin and Gracia Burnham, according to the American cable news channel Fox News.

Citing unnamed sources, Fox News said in a report posted on its website on March 25 that the "ransom was paid with private, not government money."

Fox News noted that the revelation came a month after US Department of State officials announced a change in long-standing American policy of not paying ransom as payments could be used to track down hostage takers.

Previous local news reports claimed that the New Tribes Mission, to which the Burnhams belong, had admitted that it was raising money from various sources to buy the freedom of the missionary couple.

FOX/A14

'I work side by side with revolutionaries'

By Sister Victoria Miranda
As told to Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

A NUN'S STORY
An I Team Report

(Editor's Note. Sister Victoria Miranda is a nom de guerre of a Catholic nun who joined the communist underground in the 1980s. While remaining faithful to her vows, she took part in the growth of the communist movement, and later witnessed the aftermath of the purge that saw comrades killing comrades.

She is now back with her religious community but continues her work among the poor. She describes the revolutionary struggle as "the Pasch of the Filipino people.")

(Second of three parts)

(WHEN I went underground, my sisters) never really understood but they respected and accepted my decision. Many were not happy and were afraid for me. Others were afraid to lose me. I might never come back. Some cried, superiors among them, when it was officially announced. One wrote an

I WORK/A15

Security adviser wants to bar 'snooping' foreigners from RP

By Carlito Pablo and Christine Avendaño

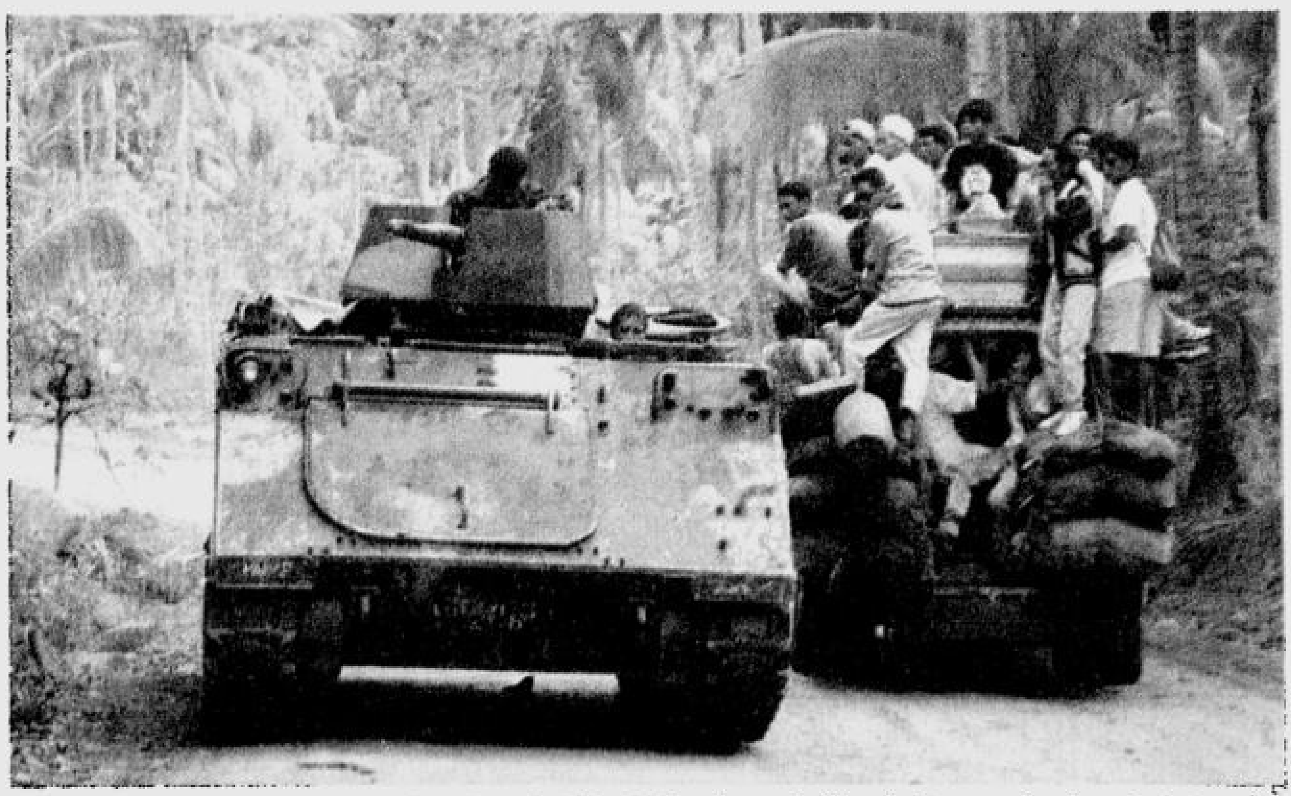
FILIPINOS are "too hospitable," according to National Security Adviser Roilo Golez who's calling for changes in the country's immigration policy to bar foreigners whose aim is "to find fault and destroy the image of our military, government and the country" from entering the country.

Golez made the proposal as he continued to assail the 14-member international peace mission, which is investigating the impact on the civilian population of the RP-US Balikatan military exercises in Mindanao.

"I think there should be a revision of our policy because we are too hospitable," Golez said. "It's not right that foreigners come here and investigate us."

He said it was inconceivable for Filipinos to form a peace mission and enter countries like Japan or Norway to meddle into their affairs. "I believe they'll be kicked out from the airport especially if they say they're there to investigate," Golez said.

SECURITY/A14



AN ORDINARY day for passengers going about their lives inside a jampacked jeep in Barangay Lumbang, Isabela, Basilan, pass a by now ordinary sight, an armored personnel carrier.

EDWIN BACASMAS

ANO YUN? NAGKATAON LANG?

Pimentel disowns 'federalists'

SENATE Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. has dissociated himself from the Indigenous Peoples' Federal Army, the federalist group claiming responsibility for the series of bomb scares in Metro Manila and Mindanao.

Pimentel, a known advocate of federalism, doubted the existence of the IPFA while expressing concern that its actions might undermine the initiative for federalism by "well-meaning and reform-minded advocates."

Also yesterday, Pimentel urged Malacañang and the Philippine National Police to recall about 500 "secret marshals," or plainclothes policemen, that have been fielded in Metro Manila after the bomb scare.

Pimentel said the security threat can be solved only by efficient police work, including intelligence-gathering backed by close cooperation of the citizenry.

In Malacañang, the Cabinet oversight committee on internal security said Filipinos can observe Holy Week without having to worry about political stability.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the committee, meeting yesterday, had reviewed the situation and did not see any "real or actual threat to this government."

But for the country's airport police, there will be no Lenten break after the discovery of yet another "federalist bomb" near the Cagayan de Oro airport at the weekend.

Alert levels have been raised in all the country's airports, said Chief Supt. Marcelo Ele, chief of the PNP-Aviation Security Group.

"It is automatic that when this happens we would have to cancel the leaves of our personnel. They would not be allowed to go on vacation," Ele said.

The alert warnings cover the Naia and the other major international and domestic airports of Cebu, Davao, Pampanga and Cagayan de Oro. ***Rocky Nazareno, Cynthia Balana, Carlito Pablo and Norman Bordadora***

Payatas raid yields suspect in bomb scare

By Tj Burgonio and Agnes E. Donato

POLICE yesterday raided the Payatas community in Quezon City and arrested a suspected member of the Moro National Liberation Front in connection with the series of bomb scares in Metro Manila the past week.

Arrested during a 6 a.m. raid on his home was Eleno Akmad Umpar, 20, of Marawi City. Police seized a .38 Armscor revolver with six bullets from him.

Nine other men were detained but later released, said Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, the Philippine National Police spokesperson.

The 10 were all residents of a tenement which had been the site of the Payatas Hospital.

Espina denied speculations that the raiding team was after bigger catch.

Search warrant

He said the military and police decided to conduct a raid on Payatas after receiving intelligence reports that Umpar was in possession of a firearm.

A local court had issued a search warrant, Espina said.

"This is an ordinary operation against illegal possession of firearms, so let's not link it to the bomb scare incidents," Espina told a press briefing.

But he said investigators would determine if the suspect had anything to do with "the bomb scare incidents."

Ren Jalaludin Ropeta, a member of the Muslim-Christian Peoples Alliance, protested the raid's apparent targeting of Muslim residents in the community.

He said that Muslims, especially those living in urban poor areas such as Payatas, neither had the capability to make bombs nor had access to bomb-making materials.

"The primary reason for the increasing number of Muslims in the metropolis remains to be poverty and the conflict in the south," he said.

Police and military intelligence launched a joint operation after a rash of bomb scares in Metro Manila and provincial cities that were claimed by shadowy groups demanding a federal government for tribal groups.

Police have recovered grenades at train stations and other public places but none of the devices was designed to explode.

Copycats

While a group calling itself the Indigenous Peoples' Federal Army has claimed responsibility for planting the dud bombs, the authorities are not discounting the involvement of other suspect groups.

Among these are the MNLF faction loyal to rogue Moro leader Nur Misuari who led a short-lived revolt in November; the Moro Islamic Liberation Front which has forged a ceasefire with the government; rightist military groups linked to coup attempts in the 1980s; and groups loyal to jailed ex-president Joseph Estrada.

Espina warned pranksters against planting "copycat improvised bombs" in public places or they would be charged.

"We will determine what will be their criminal liability. Is it the same as those planting bombs? At the least, they're causing alarm. What should be punished here is the action that they have done," he said.

At the same time, Espina appealed to the public "not to be afraid but to remain vigilant."

He admitted that the police have not identified any of the suspects spotted planting improvised bombs in public places.

"We're still evaluating our evidence. Be patient, we'll solve the case," Espina said.

So far, the only evidence that police have in their possession were sketches of two suspects and a videotape showing train commuters that had been furnished by the management of the Metro Rail Transit.

Jakarta not behind 3 Indons' arrest

JAKARTA—Indonesian Vice President Hamzah Haz on Tuesday denied a report that three Indonesians detained in the Philippines on suspicion of terrorism were held following a request from the Indonesian intelligence agency.

"That is untrue. In such a case, it would have been discussed in a cabinet meeting since the head of the intelligence agency is also present in Cabinet meetings," Haz said, according to the Detikcom online news service. *AFP*

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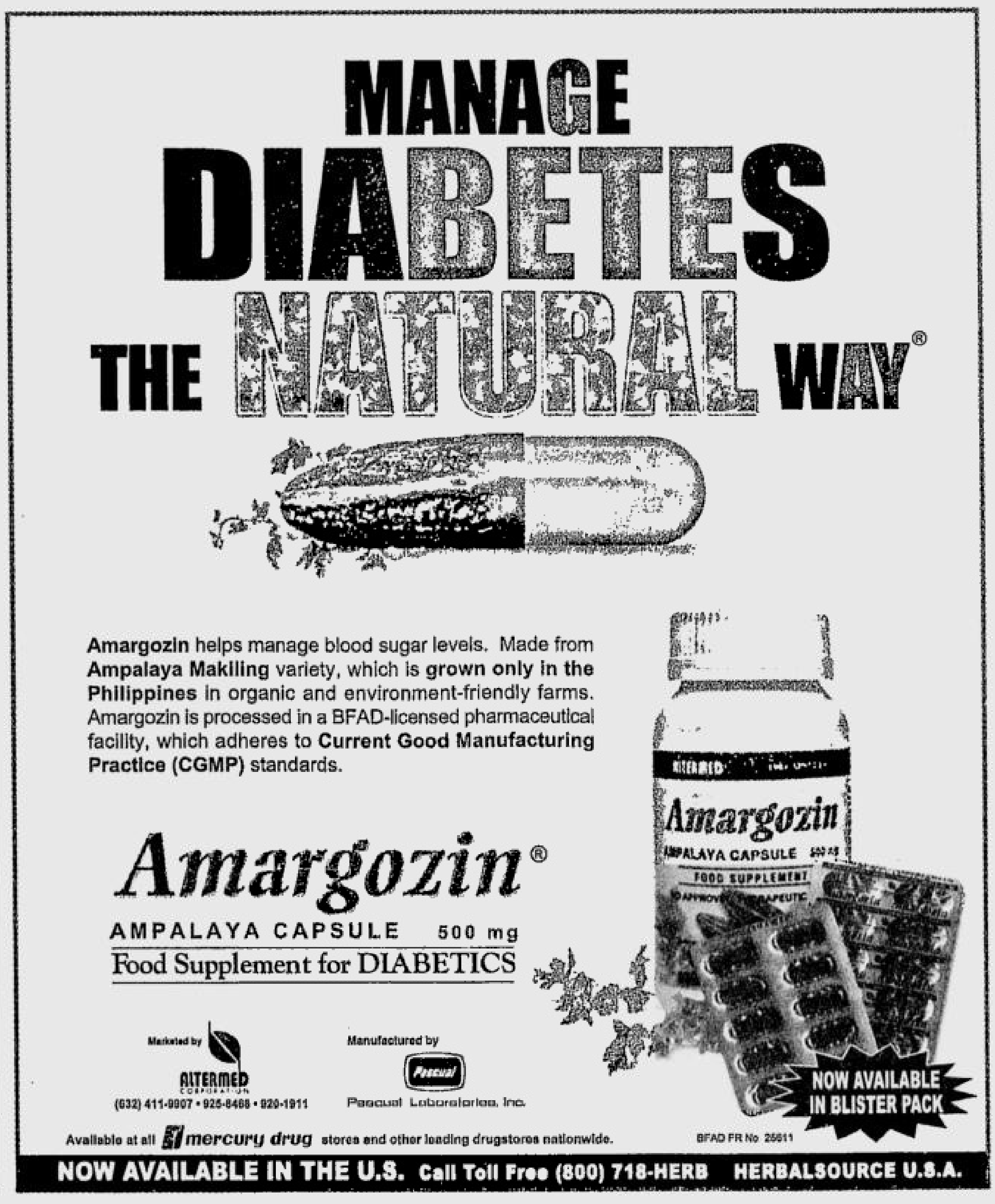
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Gloria may talk Meralco out of rate hike

By Dona Pazzibugan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo is willing to talk to the owners of the Manila Electric Co. to avert an increase in power rates.

Her spokesperson, Rigoberto Tiglao, said she asked the Lopez family to rethink their demand for such increase.

She also ordered Energy Secretary Vicente Perez to review whatever decision the Energy Regulatory Commission would make on Meralco's petition for rate increase.

During the Cabinet meeting yesterday, the President told Perez to make sure that any increase would be "very well justified" by Meralco.

"(The President) can exercise some persuasive measures on both parties, but we hope that Meralco and the Commission (will be) fully justified," Tiglao said.

He said Ms Macapagal is willing to talk to the Meralco owners, if the situation would require it.

"Probably that could be done, but we're still waiting for the evaluation of Secretary Perez," he said.

The President wants to hear from Perez "within the week" so she can decide on the proposed rate increase, Tiglao explained.

"We want a full justification of the rate increase and we can't allow any unnecessary increase at this time," he went on.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said Meralco's proposal would raise electricity bills for residential consumers by as much as 116 percent.

It said the government should not allow an added burden to households at this time.

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Reds head for new split; talks in peril

By Martin P. Marfil

A LEADERSHIP struggle in the communist guerrilla leadership is blocking the resumption of peace talks with the government, a military spokesperson said yesterday.

A faction led by Benito Tiamzon, who heads the Communist Party of the Philippines' armed wing, the New People's Army, opposes peace talks with the government, Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Jose Mabanta said.

Tiamzon's line puts him in direct confrontation with exiled CPP founder Jose Maria Sison, whose faction has been holding talks with the Macapagal-administration, Mabanta said in a statement.

Ms Macapagal suspended peace talks with the CPP-NPA's political organization, the National Democratic Front, nine months ago after the rebels assassinated two members of Congress.

Fighting factions

The Army spokesperson's statement, coming only days before the 33rd anniversary of the NPA on March 29, apparently marks a stepped-up propaganda war on the communists by the military.

Mabanta said the factions are fighting over the issues of funds and power.

Tiamzon has "questioned some political decisions that the party's central committee has taken, particularly on efforts to open peace talks with the Macapagal-Arroyo administration," Mabanta said in a statement.

Tiamzon is concerned "that this compromise could defeat the teachings that the party has propagated through the years and destroy the legitimacy of armed struggle if some members of the party will subscribe to the hope for change apart from revolution," the military spokesman added.

Tiamzon, Mabanta said, has also questioned Sison's decision to raise the number of central committee members from 15 to 30, a move that could tilt power in the party in Sison's favor.

Luxurious lifestyle

The Sison camp, meanwhile, has questioned the reportedly luxurious lifestyle of Tiamzon and his wife and has assigned a party man to audit the NPA's finances.

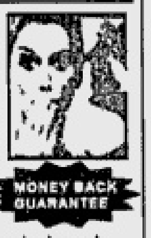
"With the endless barrage of accusations and rejoinders from both camps, the fracture in the CPP structure continues to widen which definitely will lead to irreconcilable division between the two factions and the eventual collapse of the party," Mabanta said.

The Maoist NPA launched an armed campaign in 1969 which was followed later by a bloody internal purge that claimed hundreds of guerrilla lives through the mid- to the late 1980s.

It held unsuccessful peace talks with the government in 1987 and most of its top leadership were arrested in the early 1990s.

The fall of socialism in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe in the early 1990s added to the crisis in the party. By 1993, the party had split between the CPP old guard represented by Sison on one side and some regional leaders on the other.

However, the rebels have gained ground since the 1997 Asian financial crisis. The military estimates the NPA strength at 11,930 guerrillas with 7,156 firearms as of end-2001. ***With a report from AFP***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Pray for family unity, Cardinal asks Catholics

By Armand N. Nocum

MANILA Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin, in his Holy Week message, has expressed alarm over the "lures and pseudo-values" affecting the Filipino family, the basic unit of society.

Thus, Sin asked the Catholic faithful to "ponder on the fragile condition of the family" as they share the passion and death of Christ during the Holy Week.

In a message released yesterday, Sin said everyone is "asked to take up the cross of Jesus and die to self so that the glory of God may live and reign supreme."

"And the cross does not pertain to the individual alone. Right now, the human family encounters a lot of crosses and trials," he said. "There are so many lures and pseudo-values that threaten the very life and existence of the Filipino family."

Sin did not cite the false values, but the media office of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines recently cited a study indicating that one of every four Filipino families are "crippled" by the absence of either parent due to employment abroad or separation, divorce or single parenthood.

The CBCP issued the data from the Ateneo de Manila study to encourage fathers to attend the recent "Festival of Fathers," which was aimed at fortify family ties.

Sin then called on Catholics to pray for the family unity as they join the whole Christian world in recalling the last moments of Jesus on earth.

He asked Catholics to "journey with Jesus toward Calvary and the empty tomb with the family in mind."

"As we recall the last moments of the Lord, we also ponder on the fragile condition of the family. I hope we may realize the value of family life in the Church and society," he said.

He then asked Catholics to prepare for the fourth World Meeting of Families in Manila from Jan. 23 to 26.

He said they should include in their intentions the scheduled coming of the Holy Father during the historic event.

As people "identify with Jesus' suffering" during the Holy Week, Sin prayed that they may also experience the "new life His death and resurrection bring."

"May the Filipino family incarnate the same love and compassion that consumed the Crucified Jesus," he said. "May our country, toiled by too much suffering and pain, be granted the courage and strength to go on and so share in Jesus' eternal glory and fullness of life."

Fugitive American nabbed

AN AMERICAN man wanted by the United States for money laundering and insurance fraud was arrested yesterday by the Bureau of Immigration, an official said.

The suspect, Donald Robert Weber, 39, is to be deported within the week to stand trial before a Florida court which issued an arrest warrant, Immigration Commissioner Andrea Domingo said.

Weber has been on the US government wanted list since 1999, when he was charged with conspiracy to commit money laundering from telemarketing and insurance fraud, Domingo said. *AFP*

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Gloria supports Guingona stand

From page A1

"He's not only our Vice President. He's also the foreign secretary and protocol dictates that he be recognized as the alter ego of the President and representative of the Filipino nation," Lozada said.

He said the most that the Mexican officials could have done to Guingona was to give him the "farthest seat" in the luncheon for 150 heads of state. "But to turn him away despite his title and official invitation is an inexcusable offense," Lozada said.

Lozada supported Guingona's refusal to accept the apologies of Mexican Ambassador Enrique Hubbard when he was summoned to the DFA to receive the diplomatic protest over the Mexican snub.

He said downgrading a mission and recalling an ambassador was within Guingona's powers as foreign secretary.

Lozada said this would teach Mexicans basic diplomatic courtesy and respect for diplomatic ties.

The Philippines should just maintain a "skeletal force" in its mission in Mexico since there is not much trade between the two countries anyway, according to Lozada.

He said diplomatic relations between the Philippines and Mexico were mostly "historical and cultural."

Guingona gave a speech on poverty at the United Nations International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico. He was turned away on March 21 from a luncheon tendered for heads of state who attended the UN conference, including US President George Bush, Cuban President Fidel Castro and heads of the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization.

Guingona, who represented the President in the conference, was invited to the luncheon. He was already seated when told he was not on the guest list. He left in a huff and immediately ordered the Department of Foreign Affairs to file a diplomatic protest.

The governor of the Mexican state of Nuevo Leon, which hosted the summit, as well as Hubbard have apologized to Guingona.

Terrible discourtesy

Hubbard yesterday officially handed to the DFA his written apology for the "terrible discourtesy" the Mexican government had caused Guingona. However, no apology came from the Foreign Ministry.

"We told them what we expect. Unless it comes from the Mexican Foreign Ministry, the diplomatic protest won't be put to rest," Foreign Undersecretary Franklin Ebdalin said.

Amid the diplomatic standoff, Hubbard seemed unfazed and described Philippine-Mexico bilateral ties as "still good."

"There is no difference in the way it has always been. I don't think that (the incident) has any bearing on the nation-to-nation and people-to-people relationship. We are trying to resolve the situation through a process," Hubbard said shortly after emerging from a 15-minute talk with Assistant Secretary for American Affairs Minerva Jean Flacon.

Forthcoming

Hubbard assured Falcon that a written apology from the Foreign Ministry was "forthcoming."

Despite Hubbard's effort to patch up the diplomatic row, Ebdalin insisted that Orros would "remain to cool his feet in Los Angeles" until the DFA got what it wanted.

"Ambassador Orros was supposed to have arrived in Mexico City on March 26 but the DFA told him to defer his trip until Mexico's Foreign Minister Jorge Castañeda apologizes to the Vice President," Ebdalin said.

Orros, a three-term governor of San Fernando, La Union, was a graduate of Ateneo de Manila University. He obtained his doctor of laws from Universidad Complutense in Madrid, Spain. ***With a report from Juliet L. Javellana***

GUINGONA: Demands formal apology from the Mexican foreign ministry. FILE PHOTO/JESS YUSON

1,500 Afghans killed in quakes; 4,000 hurt

From page A1

ous," a spokesperson for the defense ministry told Reuters.

The country is already struggling with the impact of a long drought, insecurity and the aftermath of fighting between US-led forces and the former Taliban rulers.

Officials said the district capital of Nahrin, near the epicenter in the rugged Hindu Kush mountains, had been destroyed and 1,500 homes had crumbled.

Interim leader Hamid Karzai canceled a trip to Turkey scheduled for Wednesday because of the quake.

The United Nations refugee agency said news was emerging only slowly from the remote mountain area, but spoke of "a devastating earthquake" with hundreds dead and many villages flattened.

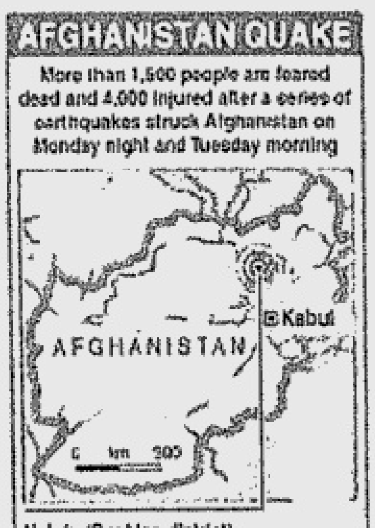
The quakes registered between 5 and 6 on the Richter scale.

The US special envoy to Afghanistan, Zalmay Khalilzad, said Karzai had announced 1,800 deaths, while a spokesperson for northern warlord General Rashid Dostum spoke of around 700 deaths.

"More than 1,500 people are said to have died in the quake," a Karzai aide told Reuters. Karzai chaired an emergency meeting of all ministries on how to deal with the tragedy, he said."

AFGHANISTAN QUAKE

More than 1,500 people are feared dead and 4,000 injured after a series of earthquakes struck Afghanistan on Monday night and Tuesday morning



Nahrin (Baghlan district)
Epicentre in the rugged Hindu Kush mountains registered five or six on the Richter scale

REUTERS

The Defense Ministry spokesperson told Reuters: "Our reports say there are 1,500 dead, 4,000 injured, at least 1,500 homes destroyed and 20,000 people are homeless."

An Afghan helicopter pilot just back after flying a team of officials to Nahrin said the town of mud-brick houses was devastated.

Villages flattened

"I found all houses flattened," Mohammad Haroon told Reuters. "People have fled to wherever they can. Aftershocks were continuing when I left at noon. We are rushing medicine and supplies as well a shrouds for the dead to the area."

Dostum's spokesperson said he was passing through the nearby city of Baghlan on Tuesday when he heard reports of the quake.

"The old city of Nahrin is completely destroyed, but there is less damage in the new city," Sibghatullah Zaki told Reuters. "The people are terrified and there is great confusion. They said they hadn't slept the whole night."

It was the second major earthquake to hit north Afghanistan this month. More than 100 people were buried by a landslide in a remote village in neighboring Samangan province on March 3 after the last quake.

Details sketchy

Aid workers in the northern town of Mazar-e-Sharif, some 200 km northwest of Nahrin, said they felt the quake on Monday night and ran out into the streets. Light shocks were also felt in the Pakistani capital, Islamabad.

A team from the United Nations, aid agencies and the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) headed from Mazar to Nahrin to assess the damage, taking hundreds of tents and blankets, ICRC and UN officials said.

"Details are sketchy—the little we know paints a picture of a devastating earthquake," said Yusuf Hassan, spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). "Hundreds have died and many villages have been razed to the ground."

"We still do not know about the full impact. Roads are bad and access to the quake area is very difficult," he said.

"Our main concern is refugees coming back home to the quake-hit area. Our message to them is 'stay put.' It is not a good time to return home."

The US Geological Survey in Colorado said the first shock, measuring 6.0 on the Richter scale, was felt at 7:26 p.m. (1456 GMT) on Monday and the epicenter was very close to Nahrin, 160 km north of Kabul.

Another quake at 2:15 a.m. on Tuesday (2145 GMT Monday) measured 5.0 on the Richter scale, USGS said on its website.

Help on the way

A spokesperson for the British-led International Security Assistance Force said the Afghan government had asked the peacekeepers to send reconnaissance teams to the earthquake area to investigate casualties and the extent of damage.

"We have been asked to send Isaf reconnaissance teams to see how we can help," Colonel Neal Peckham told Reuters in Kabul.

US envoy Khalilzad said his government would provide assistance "in dealing with this tragedy".

But the American military, whose role in Afghanistan is to fight remnants of the vanquished Taliban and their al-Qaida allies, said they did not know of any plans for them to help.

"I don't know, that would be up to the president," said US military spokesperson Major Bryan Hilferty at Bagram air base near Kabul. "But I can tell you that's not what we are built for. We are a combat headquarters."

Earthquakes are relatively frequent in the Hindu Kush mountain range. In 1998, two earthquakes killed about 8,500 people and destroyed tens of thousands of houses in Takhar and Badakhshan provinces. ***Reuters***

War reporter a robot

From page A1

he considers a dearth of solid news from the Afghan conflict, a Massachusetts Institute of Technology researcher has set about trying to build a roving, multimedia reporter.

A remote-controlled robot could help journalists troll for news in the world's hotspots, witnessing battles at close range and even conducting interviews, says Chris Csikszentmihalyi, director of the Computing Culture group at MIT's Media Lab.

For now, the Afghan Explorer lies in pieces at the MIT Media Lab, though Csikszentmihalyi hopes to dispatch it to Afghanistan in about three months. He said he intends to initially control the device from his laboratory but base the controlling software on the Web so people around the globe could eventually take turns directing it.

The invention modeled on Nasa's Mars Explorer would not only help keep reporters out of the line of fire, but could also help overcome US military's restrictions on press access, the researcher thinks.

Although only a small leap from technology already in use, a roving robot reporter that can acquire and transmit audio and video—even interacting with subjects—is a terrific idea, says John Pavlik, a Columbia University journalism professor whose work centers on the intersection of technology and reporting.

Csikszentmihalyi (pronounced cheek-sent-me-hi-ee) launched the project after the Sept. 11 attacks spurred US military action in Afghanistan.

Off the shelf

Unsatisfied with the grainy, faraway shots of falling bombs that passed for combat video, he set to work on his "newsbot" with little more than off-the-shelf hardware.

About the size of a large dog, the Afghan Explorer is powered by solar-charged battery packs. High-torque surplus motors from copy machines drive its rugged all-terrain wheels.

Controlled by satellite phone, it navigates using global positioning system technology and is intended to be aware of its environment using accelerometers, thermometers and distance sensors.

A video console mounted atop a forward shaft is a video screen framed on each side with small Web cameras, intentionally giving the console a face-like quality. The stereo images the device records help it navigate, and would allow journalists controlling it remotely to do face-to-face live interviews.

Engineered to travel about 6 to 8 kilometers per hour, the Afghan Explorer could range about 56 km per day. In diagrams, a flag with a peace symbol flies from an antenna to indicate neutrality.

No replacement

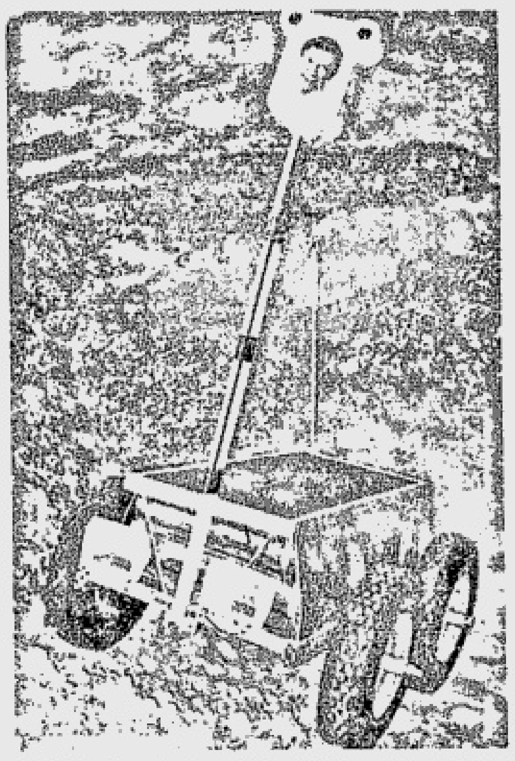
The intent was never to replace a human reporter, said Csikszentmihalyi, who described the project as part quixotic, part practical, and intends to make its plans available on the Internet.

"It's a stupid idea that somehow robotics can replace a person," he said. "But no one is bothering to ask, 'Is a Predator unmanned plane as good as a human soldier?'"

How the US military would react to a robotic front-line media presence is bound to be an issue.

Maj. Brad D. Lowell, spokesperson for US Central Command, which has jurisdiction over Afghanistan, wouldn't comment on how the Pentagon might treat a creation like the Afghan Explorer.

Currently, access at bases and other areas under direct military control is highly restricted for reporters, generally limited to pool arrangements in which a few journalists file dispatches for all news organizations.



THIS is the photo of the "Afghan Explorer," the semi-autonomous mobile robot being developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Media Lab in Cambridge, Massachusetts. AP

Reporters can travel freely elsewhere, but do so at their own risk. In some such cases, media organizations might opt for a news robot.

Science fiction

Sharri Berg, vice president of news operations for Fox News, called the Afghan Explorer the likely next step in the fiercely competitive realm of newsgathering.

"Everyone's trying to get as close to the action as possible," she said. "Sending a little metal guy in without risking a person's safety is interesting."

Fox already uses fixed, remote-controlled cameras—technology that would have seemed like science fiction even a few years ago, she noted.

Some media analysts questioned the practicality and political sensitivity of such a tool.

Robert Giles, curator of the Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University, said the introduction by media organizations of newsbots into combat zones could prompt the Pentagon to place further restrictions on journalists.

No smarts

And a newsbot certainly wouldn't have the smarts of a human.

"Would the robot know what to do when someone yells 'incoming?'" asked Giles, a former newspaper editor and publisher. "I'm not sure how practical it is."

Of course Csikszentmihalyi wouldn't be at all surprised if the Afghan Explorer were destroyed by a land mine or a skittish Afghan with a firearm, joking that he would probably shoot it himself if it rolled up to him.

Part of the invention's usefulness, he said, is that it's replaceable.

"In many ways this is no substitute for a human, and likewise, if this rolls over a land mine, that's not such a bad thing," he said. "This is expendable in the way that you can't treat a human." ***AP***

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Gloria wavers but stays the course to free trade

THE PHILIPPINES is not swerving from the free trade path despite recent signs of hesitation amid growing concerns over protectionism in global trade, analysts said yesterday.

Concerns about the government's trade policy emerged after President Macapagal-Arroyo on Monday questioned the benefits of the Philippines' continued presence in the Cairns group, a coalition of 18 agriculture exporting countries.

She also voiced disagreement over the Tariff Commission's recent recommendation to lift punitive duties on imported cement, while taking a swipe at the perils of "unbridled globalization."

Domestic cement players fear lifting the tariffs will allow a flood of cheap cement into the country, eventually destroying the local industry with the loss of thousands of jobs.

"In my view, what is happening to the cement industry is a test of what we are saying that we do not agree to unbridled globalization and what is needed is globalization with safety nets," she said in her weekly radio program on Monday.

Ms Macapagal's remarks on local radio came less than a week after she told business heads at a forum in Manila that the government "must continue to do reforms required to build our competitiveness as the global economy undergoes revitalization."

But Solita Monsod, an economist and former National Economic and Development Authority (Neda) director general, said: "Is there a weather change in the (Philippine) government's stance (on free trade) no, no, no. They are trying to stay the course."

Domestic cement players have been flooding local newspapers with advertisements claiming the Tariff Commission's proposal would lead to the destruction of the local industry. Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas has said a final ruling on the cement row would be made within 15 days of the Commission's recommendation.

Monsod said she disagreed with Ms Macapagal's views on cement but argued it was probably the result of the president having incomplete information on the issue.

"I have great hopes she will change her mind."

Another lobby group, the Federation of Philippine Industries has called on the government to pull out of the Cairns group, arguing that local agricultural producers felt "betrayed" by Australia's continued barriers against the country's tropical fruit exports.

In her radio program, she said the Cairns group members did not always agree on farm trade issues and expressed the need to forge closer ties with developing nations. ***Reuters***

Gordon sees local tourism boom

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Tourism yesterday said it is expecting a "boom" in local tourism as more people go out of town or visit their provinces to take advantage of the long Holy Week break.

In a press conference yesterday afternoon, Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon said most hotels and beaches around Metro Manila and in the provinces, such as Boracay and Baguio, have already full bookings as early as the first week of March.

Local and foreign tourists are also expected to flock to the Moriones festival in Marinduque and to the Good Friday crucifixions in Pampanga.

Gordon said the recent long holiday breaks during the Christmas season and the Edsa I and II celebrations have manifested tourism's enormous potentials as sustaining livelihood opportunities in the countryside.

The DOT and the Department of Transportation and Communications, along with local government units, have assured both local and foreign tourists of orderly, clean and safe travel to provincial destinations.

The DOTC has recently launched Oplan Kalakbay 2002, a program for the Holy Week that would ensure that travelers are given fair fares by transport firms, which usually prey on hapless commuters during peak travel seasons.

The program will focus on the major travel centers such as Metro Manila, Baguio, Cebu and Davao.

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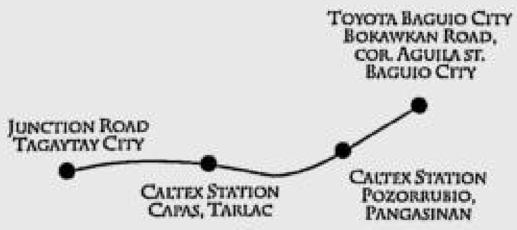
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Dramatic reforms

EDITORIAL

STRANGE things have been happening in the education sector. Early this year, the law making the Reserved Officers Training Corps program optional among undergraduates went into effect. It broadened the scope of the National Service Act, the law that made the ROTC compulsory in the first place for male college students.

The expansion would mean more programs that are oriented toward civil defense and civic responsibility and less toward military rigor, which has somehow stamped a militaristic character on the NSA by way of the ROTC, what with the latter's more recent history of corruption, mismanagement and in the celebrated case of Mark Chua, perhaps murder. The expansion would also mean rationalization (takers don't have to sweat it out for four semesters in two years, unlike the old ROTC) and gender liberalization (even women would have to take up the NSA).

The reform, perhaps the most radical in higher education in the last 10 years, shows that if the leaders of the education sector get their act together, relevant changes can be implemented in a sector that many admit to be the lynchpin in the Philippines' drive toward global economic and employment competitiveness. It must be recalled that the Chua murder triggered enough outrage among the presidents of the University Belt Consortium to compel them to issue an extraordinary call for the abolition of the ROTC. Campus activists capitalized on the statement to call for a boycott of the ROTC so that for many weeks last year, the ROTC command could hardly conduct classes in peace. In fact, only when the heads of colleges and universities persuaded the boycotters to go back to their classes did the defiance die down. In any case, the move in Congress to "abolish" the ROTC, that is, remove its compulsory character, was already in progress, with some prodding from Malacañang. The silver lining to this is that would-be male graduates who have completed the academic requirements but who have not yet finished their ROTC have been cleared by universities and colleges for graduation.

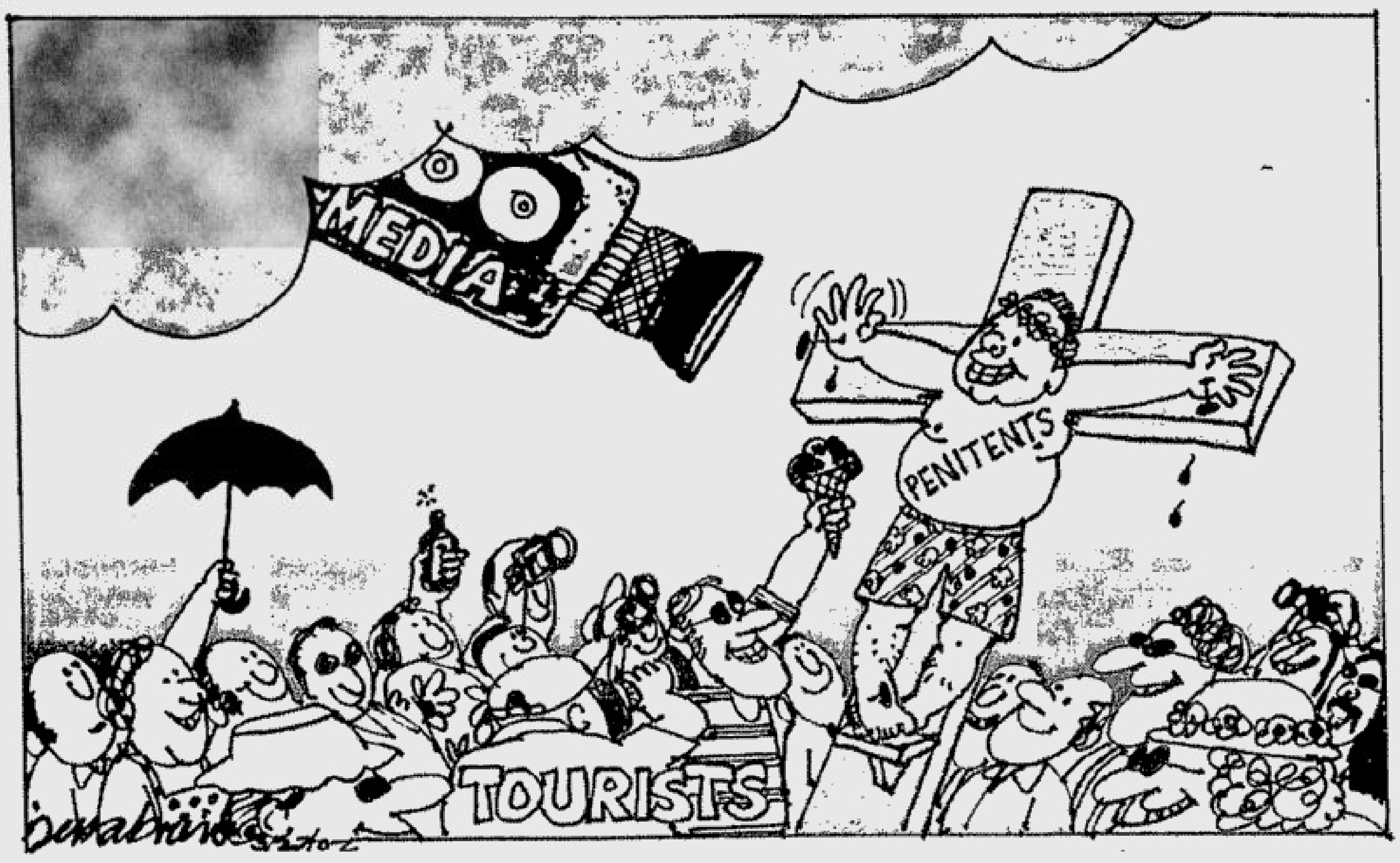
That universities and colleges can unilaterally clear their students who lack ROTC credentials for graduation shows the new muscle of our higher education institutions. This is closely linked with another recent development: the grant of autonomy to several of the country's biggest and most important higher institutions of education as well as the grant of deregulated status to certain colleges that have met the grade and shown consistency in their performance.

It is not surprising then that the Commission on Higher Education has taken on a more and more consultative tack with the higher education sector in addressing the problems bedeviling higher education, particularly the quality of undergraduates.

Recently, the CHED consulted with the academic officials of such leading universities as the University of the Philippines, University of Sto. Tomas and Ateneo de Manila University on the introduction of a pre-baccalaureate program that will winnow applicants for the full four-year undergraduate program. The proposal would mean a five-year undergraduate program or the addition of more units to the regular program. In some instances, the academic officials commended the idea behind the proposal. However, they noted that they had in fact already upgraded their own academic programs. One college, for instance, is already observing a 24-unit per semester program. Which means that by the end of the four-year course, the student will have acquired some 190 units, way beyond the 160 or so units normally required in standard undergraduate programs.

But what was the idea behind the proposal? It came by way of a critique as articulated in a Unesco study which found that the Philippines is the only country in Asia that implements a 10-year education program. In contrast, other Asian countries have school systems lasting 11 to 12 years.

Perhaps it is best for the CHED to expand the consultation and include the education department as well. Together, they must address basic but problematic issues about basic education as well.



An unforgettable, idyllic, long hot summer

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

THE EXODUS has started as residents of the concrete jungle that is Metro Manila head for the beaches, the mountains, the resorts, the old hometowns and destinations overseas. This lemming-like migration will reach its peak today and tomorrow. The provincial highways will be choked with caravans of vehicles full of sweltering passengers who think they will get relief from the heat once they reach their destinations.

When they do, they find them overflowing with the very same people they're trying to avoid back home, short of fresh water and accommodations, and food prices sky-high. Before long, the same pack heads back for home through the same traffic-choked highways. The vacationists straggle home late at night, more tired than before they began their vacations, and have to rest a few more days to recover from their stressful vacations.

You want some rest, peace and quiet this Holy Week? Stay home. Sleep, read the Bible or some other books. Lie in a hammock under a tree in the backyard with a glass of cold lemonade and listen to soothing music. Play with the children and the dogs and cats. Walk in the park—if there's one near you—but don't venture out into the highways to the provinces if you know what's good for you.

Instead, this is your chance to drive through the streets of Metro Manila quickly and with ease. Now is your chance to go and see all the places there you've wanted to see and visit relatives you've always wanted to visit but couldn't because you couldn't get there due to the traffic. Now the streets are all yours; no traffic—they're all strung out on the highways to the provinces. Be quick. This is a short-lived Paradise. By Sunday, the traffic will be back in force and road anarchy will reign again.

But on Monday, when everybody goes back to work, you'll see that you are better rested than those who went out somewhere—and spent a lot of money—to go on a vacation.

* * *

But this is that time of year, when the heat really sizzles, that you can't help thinking of long summer vacations in a remote barrio somewhere, swim in a cool stream, pasture the carabaos, help the farmers do their chores, or sleep in the grass in the shade lulled by a cool breeze. The trick is not to go there during the Holy Week but after, when the herd has gone home. And don't go to the popular resorts. Go to some remote barrio, away from the beaten track, where you can be alone with the barrio folk and their animals, and really feel the simple rural life.

The best vacation I ever had was in a remote barrio called Santa Maria, in Tarlac, Tarlac. It was across a very wide, almost dry river, from Barrio Aguso on the MacArthur Highway. The riverbed was coarse sand that became very hot during the day and you couldn't walk across it barefoot. You have to sprint from one clump of cogon grass to another like running from base to base during a baseball game. You cool the soles of your feet as you stand on the cogon grass before making the dash to the next clump.

In the middle flows a shallow stream that feels so comfortably cool after crossing the hot sands. Small fish swim in the water. Women wash clothes here and spread them out to dry on the sand and the big boulders scattered on the riverbed. Children bathe and play in the water. We stayed there to cool our feet and even bathed in our street clothes and swapped stories with the women until it was time to cross the hot sands again to the barrio.

By the time we reached the shade of the camachile trees that grew on the edge of the river, our clothes would be dry on our bodies.

The barrio was composed of bamboo-and-cogon huts spread out in a wide area. A carabao cart trail ran through the middle, partly lined with *kakawati* trees that were originally fencing for some of the houses. There was one well from which the barrio folk drew their water.

Behind the huts, beyond the bamboo groves, were the fields. They were planted to sugarcane, tomatoes, eggplants and sweet potatoes. During the rainy season, they were planted to rice.

I must have been 10 or 11 years old then and I was with my two younger brothers and my oldest married brother. We were with my brother's parents-in-law. We lived in a small newly built hut with bamboo slats for flooring, cogon grass for roofing and cogon reeds for walls. We all slept side by side on the floor.

We were all from the city and to me and my brothers this rustic life was nothing short of Paradise. We rode with the native boys to pasture the carabaos. We swam with them—and the carabaos—in the pond and irrigation ditches. We gathered *kangkong* and sweet potato tops to take home. Sometimes, we also took home some ripe tomatoes and eggplants. We broke off sugarcane stalks and munched on them all day.

When fields were plowed, crickets emerged from the upturned soil. We and other children caught them before the horde of chickens could. Skewered with coconut midribs and roasted over a low fire, they tasted very delicious. They are the same expensive *kamaro* delicacy served in Cabalen restaurants in Metro Manila.

It was a very idyllic long summer vacation for us city kids. We will never forget it. We didn't want to leave. We stayed there several months.

* * *

TODAY'S JOKE: This joke has to be told before the Holy Week ends.

ERAP: The Catholic Church is really prejudiced against me.

CARDINAL SIN: Why do you say that?

ERAP: *Bakit merong Domingo de Ramos, Sabado de Gloria, at may Sagrada Corazon de Jesus pa, pero walang araw para sa akin? Naging presidente rin ako ah.*

SIN: Sige na nga, I'll give you one day—Ass Wednesday.

* * *

Comments to asiseeit@pacific.net.ph

Logical end

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

COMPLETELY by accident, while surfing Cable TV for some late night news last Saturday night, I caught a curious program on the ABS-CBN News Network. I was completely bowled over by the fact that it managed to land a spot there. I don't know whether the sponsors paid for their spot, but the program seemed so oddly out of place.

It went by the thoroughly straightforward title, "Diskusyon sa Telebisyon." It had the air of an "El Shaddai" or an "Ang Dating Daan" campout except that it wasn't religious at all. It was perfectly secular. The program, apparently weekly to go by the host's parting invitation for his audience to meet up with him again next week, was sponsored by a group calling itself the Discovery Crusade of the Philippines Intl. The head of the Crusade was one Don Edmundo Pamintuan, whom I presume was also the host of the program. He claimed at one point to have drawn a following of tens of thousands. Such, he said, was the power of his cause. The credits at the end of the program listed the various chapters of the group, which, if they are to be believed, stretched across the nation

Pamintuan himself (if it was he) spoke English with a thick accent that proclaims him to come from the South. He wore a coat and a tie decorated with the stars and stripes. He spoke to a small studio audience, who were mostly in the above-40 bracket. Some of them wore coat and ties as well; some wore World War II veteran caps. Most of them seemed to belong to the middle class, probably lower middle class. They nodded intermittently in the course of Pamintuan's discourse—which sounded like a secular version of Mike Velarde's sermons—as though allowing the wisdom of his words to sink in.

Pamintuan's cause is simple: he wants the country to go back to Commonwealth days.

I did not catch the whole program, and so do not know how he proposed to tackle the legal obstacles to his project. I do not know as well if he distinguished his project from the more traditional statehood movement that has been associated with Cabangbang. Cabangbang ran repeatedly for the presidency on the strength of that platform before martial law, though he was always regarded as a nuisance candidate because of it. I did catch enough, however, of Pamintuan's arguments to see where he was going with his crusade.

It should be clear by now, Pamintuan said, that we made a mistake in seeking, or accepting, independence. We were unprepared. That should be patent in the kind of society we have created, one characterized by poverty and ignorance. Between a Philippines ran like hell by Filipinos and one ran like heaven by Americans, he—and he was sure other Filipinos like him—would choose the latter hands down. Asking the Americans for help doesn't quite do the trick. What did was going the whole hog, asking the Americans to take over the country. We would not really be beggars if we did, we had something to give back too. The country was rich. All we had to do was make the Americans realize the bounties of this earth.

Legally, Pamintuan said with breathtaking logic, our situation was not unlike that of a son whose parents were divorced. Our original father was a millionaire, while our stepfather is a drunken lout. Shouldn't we have a right to seek out our real father and make a claim upon him? Aren't we entitled to an inheritance too, however modest or infinitesimal, as a legitimate son?

Now, doubtless, all this will be dismissed in "respectable" circles as a nuisance or grotesquerie. But in fact it is the logical conclusion of the arguments government and the camp endorsing American troops in this country have been putting forward. For all its seeming absurdity, it is in fact far more logical than those arguments.

Those arguments say that the reason we need American troops in this country is that we cannot get rid of a small band of kidnappers who have abandoned all pretense at being politically motivated. We should stop being foolishly proud, we should stop thinking sovereignty can be eaten. Well, if that's so, why limit the American help to troops to rout the Abu Sayyaf? The PNP cannot rid this country of crimes too—Nida Blanca's murder remains unsolved to this day—why not import the FBI to do the job? The economic czars cannot rid this country of poverty and inequality too—they've only made them worse—why not ask for American advisers? Government cannot rid the bureaucracy of the corrupt and incompetent too—it only changes the cast of characters each time—why not ask for American efficiency experts?

Indeed, why limit the solution to this? Why not go the whole hog and demand to become a state of the United States? Or as Pamintuan shows more brilliantly, why not demand to revert to Commonwealth status, which legally only means voiding half a century of useless independence? It is simple, it is direct, it is complete. The half-hearted solution only compounds the problem by rewarding failure. Not doing your job becomes a ticket to getting help. Or as in the case of the PNP and AFP, to getting a bigger budget: They've been very creative in transforming their stupidity into an argument for being poor and underpaid.

Pamintuan's crusade sweeps all this away, like litter from a table. It goes right to the heart of the problem. His logic is inexorable, his logic is unassailable. We cannot meet the barest requirements of independence, we should not be independent. We cannot live up to the simplest tenets of sovereignty, we should not be sovereign. We should go back to the days of the Commonwealth.

Catch Pamintuan's program one Saturday and see if you don't laugh. But see too whose face you see on his face in the end. And wonder whom you are laughing at.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

Protectionist nostalgia

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

IN THE RUN-UP to the Holy Week, there has been a qualitative change in the content of news in the media. The front pages of the broadsheets have printed fewer political news and have given more prominence to economic and security events, the latter focusing on the military campaign of the Armed Forces, backed by the expertise of the US military, against the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

The religious fervor that usually flows from Lent has litrle to do with this shift. The media just got tired highlighting the antics of deposed President Joseph Estrada in his rebellion against the judicial system after March 16, when his desperate effort to incite the urban poor to demonstrate against his arraignment for perjury at the Sandiganbayan failed to bring them to the streets. From that time onwards, Estrada as a center of news, has become stale and media could no longer squeeze stories out of him without becoming boring and repetitive.

Over the past two weeks, apart from the joint RP-US Balikatan 02-1 exercises in Basilan, economic news has increasingly replaced politics and even crimes on the front page.

When we speak of economic news, we do not refer to the periodic forecasts on gross national product growth by the National Economic Development Authority, pointing to a small rise in the gross domestic product nor to the recent expression of confidence by both the domestic and international communities in the Macapagal administration. A new dimension of economic news that has gained wider attention in the press is the rise of protectionist concerns that have called into question the Philippines' membership in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Cairns Group of agricultural countries, and that have advocated protection for the local cement industry from foreign imports.

In the rush to jump into the tide of globalization during the Ramos administration years, globalization having been touted as a cure-all for national development and prosperity, a backlash has developed after we realized that we have committed ourselves to rapid dismantling of tariffs and trade barriers even before we have erected safety nets to enable our industries to stand up to international trade competition.

Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II has made unsettling sounds over plans to withdraw from the WTO and from the Cairns Group. Roxas has been ambiguous about what he really means, but his statements have created doubts whether he has seriously considered the consequences of a pull-out.

The name Roxas rings a bell in Philippine protectionist literature. His grandfather Manuel Roxas, who became president in 1946, was, during the Commonwealth government, the leader of the Nepa (National Economic Protectionism Association) movement. The theme of Nepa was "buy Filipino products," even though they were not the cheapest in the market and did not have the highest quality. The drive rode on the back of economic nationalism, which at the time, glossed over the question of who were going to benefit from "buy Filipino products"—the consumers (i.e., the masses) or the producers (who coincidentally were composed of the economic elite). Roxas II is an echo of the first Roxas, but the latter proclaims it in the 21st century after the Philippine economy has broken away from the framework of the Payne-Aldrich Tariff Act that defined Philippine-US bilateral economic relations.

Today, in the face of tough competition in the globalized economy and of the global economic slowdown which has reduced Philippine exports to the advanced industrial economies, protectionist nostalgia is staging a strong resurgence. The resurgence finds expression in the protest of the cement cartels against the tariff commission's findings that slapping tariffs on imports would be harmful to both the economy and the consumers. It finds expression in the call for withdrawal from the WTO or redefining our position in it, and withdrawal from the Cairns Group of agricultural producers.

It is not clear whether the intention is merely to revise our terms of relationship with them, whether we are worse off or better off outside these organizations, and whether we can improve our trading position and fight agricultural subsidies provided by the United States and Europe to their farm products, singly rather than behind a regional or agricultural bloc. It is easy to say we want to pull out because many of our agricultural or trade interests are incompatible with those of members of either the WTO or the Cairns Group. But we have not really considered seriously what trade and agricultural items we have a common interest with other members of the Cairns Group. Certainly, there should be items of common interest and items where our interest clashes with those of our Cairns partners (such as export of Philippine mangoes and fruits to Australia).

The alternative to seeking selective items for common interest in the Cairns Group is, of course, trade isolation. I wonder if any medium-sized country like ours can survive in autarky and isolationism.

When local industries are under siege, protectionist rhetoric has a strong resonance coming from a long history of post-war protectionism regimes. It has tapped a protectionist vein running just underneath our skin. But protectionism, either through tariff walls or government subsidies (overt or covert), is a recipe for being non-competitive and inefficient and having relatively higher prices. It is not a coincidence that the call for "buy Filipino" or protectionism comes from the business elite used to being sheltered in the greenhouse of protection. The consumers' voices are hardly heard.

When God says 'no'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

A FRIEND sent me a book recently, promising it would make "good Holy Week reading." No, it wasn't a stultifying or guilt-inducing volume on sin and redemption, but a collection of down-to-earth but spiritual essays titled "Amusing Grace." It is actually a collection of articles written for the magazine Kerygma under the column title "Kitchen Scribbles."

The writer is Rosanne Romero, who with her husband Omy are members of Ang Ligaya ng Panginoon Community and much sought-after speakers before Catholic prayer groups nationwide. Rosanne also has multiple sclerosis or MS, and she tells the story of how God tested her faith and will by throwing MS her way in the essay that follows. The second part of her story comes out tomorrow.

* * *

"AND they thirsted not WHEN He led them through the desert."—Isaiah (48:21)

The first time I encountered this line, I remember thanking God for being a faithful God to His people Israel—delivering them from Egypt, passage through the Red Sea, water from the rock and manna from heaven. For over a week now, I had been receiving this same verse as an impression from the Lord.

Why? Vaguely, I felt God meant to drive home a point. But what? Later still, I asked, "Are You taking me to a desert?"

Question after question. "Where is this desert, what will it be like? How long do You intend for me to stay there? Can it be—as You say—that I will not thirst? I began to get more unsettled by the verse, so I thought it best to take it up with my husband, Omy. I read him the verse, told him I had been getting it for over a week. Could he sense anything? Omy heaved a sigh and showed me the verse he was getting. Mine was from Isaiah. Omy had been getting just one line from Hosea. The verse ran, "So I am going to bring her into the wilderness and there in her heart I will speak." (Hosea, 2:14) Desert and wilderness—we grew certain that God was preparing us for a time of difficulty.

Not long after this, I began to experience pins and needles on my arms and legs. I was having double vision, my gait staggered like I had had one drink too many. I had occasional falls and began to drop things very often.

I went to see an orthopedist, sure that all I had was a pinched nerve. I was told that I needed to see a neurologist. After tests were done, the neurologist announced that I might have multiple sclerosis (MS is its nickname). She explained what it was—a degenerative disabling disease of the central nervous system (brain and spinal cord). MS progresses and disables its victims bit by bit.

* * *

I LISTENED to all this in a cool and collected way, nodding at every point the doctor elaborated. Inside me, I was getting all clogged up. "This is bad. How can I be sick with such a dread disease? And disable me—livewire me? No!"

I was on the eighth floor and I could feel my eyes smarting. So I decided not to wait for the elevator. I raced down all those flights of stairs to the adjacent parking lot and drove home. Alone in the car I begged, "Not this desert, please?"

I busied myself. I frantically tightened one button after another on very old blouses and skirts. I jogged and jogged. I was angry. My hands had always been dexterous and my legs agile and I sewed and jogged in a kind of frenzy—as if keeping them dexterous and agile depended entirely on my own efforts. Something ugly was showing up here. I called myself a Christian but I saw that my immediate response to something was not one of prayer. I did not turn to Him immediately. I first turned to myself. I didn't ask, "Lord, help me." I was going to help me.

* * *

EARLIER I had said, "Not this desert, please." By evening I was sullenly asking, "Why this desert, Lord?"

It is a time of difficulty that makes our real character weaknesses come to surface. This is God's mercy—to show us where we still need to be changed so we can come closer to Him. The first thing God pointed His finger at was my self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency is a wonderful trait to have, but too much of it makes one proud. And proud people don't call upon the Lord. Any time I got myself into trouble, I was so good I could worm myself out of it. If there was any problem, well, I happened to have the talent, the skill needed to figure it out. Then God threw MS my way. Would my self-sufficiency solve this problem? And what of my skills and talents? Taken by themselves, they are useless. This was very frustrating for someone who had relied on them heavily. Again I say, it's God's mercy to break me in this way.

Very often, I say: "Lord I love You so much. Only, my love is so imperfect." I want to love God more deeply and it is having MS that gives me that chance to grow deeper in my love for Him. I heard Him speak of this as I waited for my turn to have a brain scan done. I waited and fidgeted. I worried about what they would find. What would the scan reveal? What would it show? (Would they find a brain?)

From this long waiting for my turn, I realized that the Lord puts all of us through a similar scan. A spiritual scan, so to speak. Or better yet, a soul scan. This is the kind of scan that should concern me more. If the Lord put me through this scan today, what would He find? Would He find any love in my heart? And if so, what kind of love would He find? Would He find a steadfast love, remaining faithful and staunch through difficulty, or the kind of love that fades at the onset of an affliction?

Dominican friars as POWs

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

ONE wonders how much work will be done today. If I were one of the unfortunate souls who still have to report to work half-day, I will be physically present, but my mind and spirit will be far away from the office. Either I will be deep into Lenten reflection or busy choosing options for the holidays. This column is my last chore for the week and I do look forward to the idea that there will be no INQUIRER column on Good Friday. Like Christmas, Independence Day, Bataan Day, Bonifacio Day, All Saints' Day and Rizal Day, columnists have to find something suitable for the occasion that they have not written before.

I consulted friar chronicles on the Philippines from the 16th to the 19th century which yielded a lot of material but most of it unsuitable for Lent. I shelved all the juicy material for future columns and decided to write a feel-good column and focus on a good Spanish friar. Naturally, the first place to look was the masterful biography of Domingo de Salazar, O.P, by the Dominican historian Lucio Gutierrez, O.P. Not many people know that the first bishop of Manila often clashed with civil authorities when he fought for the rights of the converted "natives." After reading the book I had enough material for three columns. If you think it is frustrating trying to find column material, it is actually difficult if you have too much.

Finally, the answer to my prayers came in the form of another book from the University of Santo Tomas Press, "The Dominicans and the Philippine Revolution 1896-1903" by the eminent historian Fidel Villaroel, O.P. I had browsed through the book shortly after its launching in 1999 and failed to notice seven letters exchanged between the Dominican superior in Intramuros and the American chaplain aboard Dewey's flagship Olympia. The original letters are preserved in the Archivo de la Provincia del Santo Rosario and were published for the first time in Villaroel's book. The letters will not make a dent in our national history but they are important because they prove that despite the naval blockade of Manila Bay and the isolation of Intramuros in 1898 the friars were not completely incommunicado. What the letters lack in detail is offset by the humanitarian concern over the Dominican friars held as prisoners of war by Emilio Aguinaldo. On one side you see the Spanish Dominican superior using the American chaplain to facilitate the release of his confreres held by the Filipinos. On the other hand, we see that except for insufficient food, the prisoners were treated well by the Filipinos.

The correspondence is in English and that of the Dominican is quite amusing because you can see that it was composed in Spanish and translated literally in English. In July 1898 the Dominican superior offers the American chaplain a supply of hosts, wine, candles and other articles for the celebration of Mass. He invites the chaplain to visit them in Intramuros and after two introductory paragraphs of pleasantries, gets on with the business at hand:

"At Cavite there are some Religious Fathers of Our Order (and also of other orders) catched [sic] by the revolutioners, and if it is not molestful to you, and your occupations consent it, I pray that you give the charity of visiting them, of consoling and helping, and also even of being interested in their liberty, because it is not possible to be considered as prisoners of war the persons that do not hand the arms against nobody, and if some Religious Fathers, surely very few, has grasped the arms, it has been for defense of your [sic] persons, knowing that the insurgents from this, induced by the masonery, had sweared [sic] their death or their captivity."

The American chaplain took the offer of supplies for Mass and reported that he had visited the imprisoned friars in Cavite. Aside from the chaplain, the German consul had also visited the prisoners and gave them P40. All looked well except for Fr. Francisco Garcia "whose nose was almost cut-off—he is well—suffers no pain." Aside from the friars, the Dominican sisters were also captured but were not kept in Cavite. In another letter the chaplain wrote to thank the Dominican superior for sending him sheet music for a Mass that could be accompanied by a military brass band. He had also received P100 that was offered as ransom for the friars. It is interesting that Aguinaldo later separated the prisoners—the same technique used by the Abu Sayyaf when they are cornered. The American wrote:

"...A great change has occurred. The Fathers have been sent away by the insurgents and I cannot find where they are imprisoned.

"Our Admiral Dewey allowed me to call on Aguinaldo and beg for the liberation of the Fathers. Mr. Evans of Hongkong and I visited Aguinaldo at his headquarters in Bakoor. We pleaded for an hour—proving that the Fathers should be liberated. Aguinaldo answered that the Fathers were prisoners of war and would be held as hostages to be exchanged should any of his soldiers become Spanish captives...Aguinaldo said he would send his answer to Admiral Dewey. He did so but it was a refusal to liberate the Fathers. The Admiral was sorry but it cannot be helped."

Nothing came of the negotiations and the correspondence is but proof that priests and religious use many channels—aside from God—to get things done.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ambeth@admu.edu.ph

Fight hard for RP interest within WTO

COMMENTARY

Rizalino S. Navarro

IT was during my incumbency as trade secretary seven years ago when the Philippines acceded to the World Trade Organization. Since then, questions have been raised and continue to be raised about the wisdom of the Philippines' membership in the WTO. That this has been the experience does not surprise me, given that there are decidedly gainers and losers in the globalization process, which is underpinned by the free movement of goods and services across borders. But to get off this global train and in the process abandon the WTO is like throwing the baby with the bath water.

Economic evidence suggests that trade liberalization stimulates economic activity and boosts productivity. More jobs, higher wages, lower prices and more choices for consumers. And because it raises incomes and lowers costs of living, individual citizens and their governments are better able to devote resources to education, health, shelter and protecting the environment. It is the developing countries like the Philippines, particularly the poor and the farmers, who stand to lose more if this process is halted or even reversed.

International trade rules and WTO disciplines promote a level-playing field. They give the poorer countries the chance to defend themselves against pressures from powerful trading partners. This may not happen all the time, specially when powerful countries arbitrarily adopt discriminatory measures (e.g., US tariffs on imported steel). But precisely because the WTO is based on non-discrimination, rich and poor countries alike can be challenged when they violate the agreement. They have an equal right to lodge a complaint in the WTO's Dispute Settlement Board. (Incidentally, the Philippines is represented in this WTO body by former Supreme Court Justice Florentino Feliciano.) Decisions are taken by consensus allowing all members, big or small, to have a say and a rules-based fora to say it.

The Philippines is a small trading country. On its own, it does not have much leverage to negotiate as an individual country with the big players in the global trading game. It is, therefore, in its best interest to remain in the WTO. It has allied itself with other WTO member countries with developing economies (e.g., Asean) to promote its economic, albeit parochial, interests. Membership in the WTO lends predictability and consistency to the trading environment as WTO members are required to grant most-favored-nation treatment to its exports and to adhere to certain rules and disciplines in the conduct of international trade transactions. This is the same strategy adopted in the Asean through its Common Effective Preferential Tariff (CEPT) scheme. Historical data prove that the Philippines' intra-Asean trade had the highest growth among the members.

This is not to say that concerns about trade and global-ization are not real. Indeed they should be addressed. The process of moving toward global integration and of enjoying benefits is neither instantaneous nor painless.

Globalization and liberalization can lead to the marginalization of some sectors and to widening the income gaps between those who are able to adjust to the new requirements and those who cannot. For the latter, the Philippine Congress precisely legislated safety nets (i.e., support mechanisms like infrastructure development, institutional capacity building, training, export incentives) to cushion the adverse impact of globalization.

Evidence suggests that, on the whole, the benefits of liberalization and globalization outweigh the costs. This explains why, notwithstanding the representations of the opponents of globalization, there are still some 30 countries waiting to get into the WTO after China.

But the WTO will only serve Philippine interests well if the latter knows how to assert its rights while at the same time adhering to its obligations. The Philippines should participate actively in the WTO process to ensure that its concerns are taken into consideration and the rules are interpreted and implemented accordingly. Given that the Doha Round is already happening, the Philippines should work with the rest of the WTO membership to ensure that it truly becomes a development round. This means actively negotiating to open markets of developed countries through the progressive reduction of tariffs and elimination of non-tariff barriers, accompanied by the strengthening of rules and disciplines as well as technical assistance and capacity building for developing countries.

The WTO brings together developed and developing countries in addressing the trade and investment dimension of the globalization process. The onus is on both sides of the North-South divide to manage this process so that it benefits their citizens fully. For the North, not to pander to narrow interests to gain political capital and to recognize the development needs of the South and therefore of rules that recognize this. For the South, not to forever rely on special and different treatment in the WTO as a substitute for genuine efforts—which means accepting that it will entail pain—to make their economies efficient and competitive and to provide safety nets to those requiring adjustment to prosper in such an environment. And for both, to do a better job of making a case for free and fair trade.

Rizalino S. Navarro is chair of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. and former trade and industry secretary.

THEY SAID

Ignore threats or tantrums

"We cannot allow threats and tantrums to impair the impartial and speedy dispensation of justice."

—Senate President Franklin Drilon urging the Sandiganbayan to ignore external pressures and proceed with former President Estrada's trial

What handicap?

"Even I don't believe I'm blind, that's because I can see and feel beyond what the sight-blessed people can."

—Andro Ilao, a blind domino champion who is also a musician, singer, composer, physical therapist and electronics technician

Correcting a wrong

"I don't like being wrong, but once I found I was, I knew I had to get the word out."

—Astronomer Karl Glazebrook on the real color of universe

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Winning their battles

YES! My best friend and I are winning our battles.

I am on my fourth year of battling the "Big C," breast cancer, while my friend Jo Mendoza-Galera won the first round of the battle against her former employer, Mind Share Phil. of the WPP Group of Companies. The National Labor Relations Commission (NLRC) recently rendered a decision giving a record award of P170 million to Galera, a Filipino executive who was deemed illegally dismissed last December 2000.

I was a witness to how Galera sacrificed her family to grab the opportunity of setting up Mind Share in the Philippines. Having known Galera since our college days at the University of the Philippines, I was confident she would always be a winner because she gives 101 percent of herself to anything she does. She set aside marriage as she made a name for herself in advertising until one day, still at the height of her career, she decided she wanted to get married and off we went to the United States to find her "ideal man," and she found Joe Galera. But several years later, she was lured by the WPP to set up Mind Share in the Philippines. The next two years saw Galera giving another of her 101-percent dedication to a new career opportunity, leaving behind an understanding and supportive husband in the United States, only to discover one day that Mind Share was no longer willing to "share their minds" with Galera. She was dismissed just like that. My friend was truly devastated, the same feeling I had when I was told I got the "Big C."

Now it's time to "teach them a lesson" as Rina Jimenez-David wrote in her "At Large" column of the INQUIRER on March 13. David gave her "mind share" of Galera's humiliating experience.

Galera set about giving a lesson to the WPP which thought that a conglomerate like it could go around the law after ruining someone's career. Just like Galera, I am teaching victims of the "Big C" that there is life after cancer. It is just a matter of winning the battle.

There is life after Mind Share for Jo Mendoza-Galera after winning her battle, thanks to the NLRC and to labor arbiter Edgardo Madriaga.

—CELIA VENTURINA-GUZMAN, Pasig City

Most inappropriate undertaking

MAYOR Nene Aguilar has reversed the image he has always wanted to project before the public eye with the development of a polo club right within barangay Talon in Las Piñas, well-known as a community of working class families.

He should have foreseen its impact on his poor constituents and even on the patrons of the millionaire's game. It is an open insult to the poor who lack even the most essential needs while the players are understandably uncomfortable with the environment.

The three-hectare polo field was acquired for a song by the powers-that-be from farmers who were powerless to resist the pressure put on them. If Aguilar had been committed to the welfare of the landless, thousands of families could have been squeezed into the property as against a handful who use it for frivolous recreation.

A polo club is ideal only in places like Ayala Alabang, where the players are more at home. Flaunting the sport of the rich and leisured class in an environment of widespread deprivation is like rubbing salt on an open wound.

Instead of this triviality, it will do well for Aguilar to build more alternative roads and solve the worsening traffic woes in Las Piñas.

This contrast reflects the sad reality in Philippine society. And it will surely work negatively against the image of the Aguilars.

Mayor Aguilar can yet reverse the bad impression if he closes the club and transfers it to a more fitting location.

—JIMMI SANTOS SANTOS, Sto. Niño, Parañaque City

ECC for Cebu memorial park questioned

WE wish to express our gratitude for the technical team sent to study the ground situation in Banawa Hills in relation to the proposed memorial park to be set up by the Banawa Hills Development Corp.

A new development has cropped up regarding our situation. We just learned that a memorandum of agreement has been entered into between the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and the Department of Health back in June 1998, in which the DOH is supposed to be involved in assessing health risks in proposed projects that require the issuance of environment compliance certificates since the DOH regional office was never involved in the assessment of potential health risks that the proposed memorial park could trigger. Director Alan Arranguez, it appears, completely ignored the MOA and did not involve the DOH in the scoping process and even in the technical hearings on the projects. In effect, he railroaded the issuance of the ECC even before obtaining the locational clearance from the Cebu City Zoning Board. He failed to involve the proper office in the city health department regarding the proposed project.

The acts of Arranguez can now be regarded as highly irregular and should be investigated not only by the DENR, but also by the Ombudsman.

In view of the facts we have unearthed, we are therefore requesting that the ECC previously issued to the BHDC, which was suspended by Red Momongan, be revoked. We are told that the BHDC is demanding that the suspension be lifted. We ask that a new evaluation and study be made before a new ECC is issued. Such new study should include the DOH regional office as the MOA so indicated.

—GOOD SHEPHERD SISTERS, Banawa Community, Banawa Hills, Cebu City

No bullying, no gender issue

IN HIS letter, Max de Mesa demanded that Maj. Gen. Romeo Dominguez resign for calling a woman witness a liar. (PDI, 3/19/02)

I was in that session at the Senate. My husband was asked by one of the legislators what he thought of the woman whose affidavit he believed contained mostly fabrications and indeed his retort sounded like the quoted remark.

He seemed angry; he was angry. She had detailed the nonexistent black attaché case's dimension, but could not recognize the aide who was seated right beside her! As it was the procedure, he addressed the chair and not the other party. It could not be an act of bullying.

In raising the issue, the writer was careful not to stir the gender issue. I was with a group of women at the time. We saw it differently. We saw an officer who, after years of honorable service, was being maligned in an extended trial-by-publicity based on fabrications by people unknown to us; who, unfortunately, were not even cross-examined and whose credibility could not be ascertained. My husband tried to answer questions honestly.

When his attention was called to his raised voice, my husband apologized outright to the chair—on advice of his lady lawyer.

My mother-in-law, our only daughter and myself have agonized through these wild accusations against my husband. He has convincingly pointed out the malice and distortions of facts by his accusers. Even Channel 2 reporter Doris Bigornia refuted the witness' assertion about the black attaché case. There was neither bullying nor a gender issue there. And De Mesa mentioned Recio's testimony but ignored the part that says Recio negotiated directly with the Abu Sayyaf and that money changed hands two months after my husband left Basilan.

—ELBE S. DOMINGUEZ, 9D Army Clusters, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City

Myths and Yarns

By Pro- Cement Importer Organizations

IN THE WAKE of the controversy generated by recommendation of the Tariff Commission against the application for safeguards by the local cement industry against the surge of cement imports, certain organizations have resurfaced with paid ads against the industry. These self-proclaimed consumer organizations never even participated in the four-day public consultations before the Tariff Commission, but are now acting as mouthpieces of the importers.

Their advocacy brings to fore the question: if they are pro-consumer, why are they defending cement importers who bring in cement at P58 per bag but sell them retail at prices higher than local cement? Even the Tariff Commission found that imported cement was being sold at retail prices higher than local cement.

And why are they against safeguards when it is incontrovertible that after the 200-day P20.60 per bag tariff was imposed on imported cement by the Department of Trade and Industry, the retail prices of cement, including imported cement that was retailing for as high as P150/bag, plunged to P125 per bag?

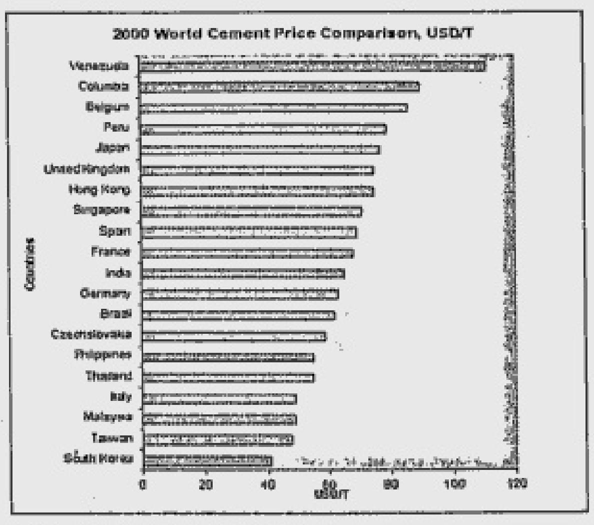
The only logical deduction is that their advocacy is not for the consumers they pretend to defend but for importers who, in the face of a definitive safeguard measure, stand to lose their exorbitant and immoral profits. It is this interest that they are protecting and nothing else.

Thus, they prevaricate and lie about the industry hoping that their lies repeated many times can become the truth. For the record, these lies have to be unmasked for what they are: propaganda to defend importers' profit margins in the guise of consumer advocacy.

Myth and Yarn 1: *Philippine cement prices are the highest in the region and in the world.*

Answer: No. This is an outright lie. Based on the data submitted by Southern Cross (importer of Japanese cement) to the TC, Philippine cement prices were the highest only when the Philippines was import dependent in the mid-1990s. Currently, however, Philippine cement prices are even lower than Japan and are at par with cement prices in Thailand. (Please see the slide on world cement prices below:)

WORLD CEMENT PRICES



COUNTRIES	2000e, USD/T
South Korea	41
Taiwan	48
Malaysia	49
Italy	49
Thailand	55
Philippines	55
Czechslovakia	59
Brazil	62
Germany	63
India	65
France	68
Spain	69
Singapore	71
Hong Kong	75
United Kingdom	75
Japan	77
Peru	79
Belgium	86
Columbia	90
Venezuela	111

Source: Goldman Sachs Global Equity Research, Aug 11, 2000

Also, after the imposition of the 200-day P20.60 per bag tariff, retail cement prices stabilized at P125 per bag. This only proves that safeguard is beneficial not only to industry and labor but also consumers.

Myth and yarn 2: *The local cement industry is foreign owned. The TC made a finding that 89% of the industry's capacity is controlled by foreigners.*

Answer: Look who's talking! About 95% of the importers' capitalization is foreign owned. TCC Cement, the biggest importer of Taiwan cement, is 100% owned by the Taiwan Cement Corporation. Southern Cross is 100% owned by Japan's Taiheiyo Cement Corporation. These 100% subsidiaries are conduits for their parent companies' excess cement.

On the other hand, what the TC refers to as 89% of the industry's capacity belongs to companies that received foreign investments. Thus, TC referred to 89% of capacity not capitalization. Only Continental Operating Company is 100% foreign-owned. Union Cement is 60% owned by Phinma. Northern Cement and PACEMCO are 100% Filipino-owned. Four companies are publicly listed: Union, Alsons, Republic and Seacem (parent company of FR Cement and Lloyd's Richfield).

Also, the cement industry proudly received the most substantial foreign investments in any industry in the Philippines and it is grateful for these investments. These much needed investments entered in the wake of the 1997 Asian crisis when the drop in cement demand and the soaring debts of the local cement companies nearly led to the collapse of the industry. The foreign investors infused additional capital to companies and refinanced loans with crushing high interests. Were it not for the foreign investments, the industry would have shutdown in 1997.

Myth and yarn 3: *The imposition of safeguards is contrary to the interest of the construction industry and construction workers.*

Answer: The long term interest of the construction industry is better served with a stable cement industry because it assures stable supply and prices, as well as quality. We should learn from our lessons in the mid-1990s when the country was import dependent on cement. Prices behaved wildly, reaching as much as P200 per bag. Supply was erratic, and imports had to be made from as far as Turkey. When the country was import-dependent, the construction industry was really severely affected.

The construction industry workers are more assured of stability in their jobs if we have stable local industries in the manufacture of construction supplies, rather than being import dependent. The Balikatan ng mga Manggagawa sa Konstruksyon, a member of government-labor-contractor tripartite body, realizes this, such that it supports the local cement industry in its application for safeguards.

Only contractors who are also importers are affected by the safeguards, because they will be having less profits.

Myth and yarn 4: *The imposition of safeguards will affect the Government's low cost housing program.*

Answer: Cement is not a significant cost of construction. For low cost housing, for example, cement is only 7% of the cost.

A low cost house costs P180,000. It takes 75-100 bags to build one low cost house. Assuming the use of 100 bags, when multiplied by P125/bag, the cost of cement would amount to only P12,800, or 7% of the cost of the low cost house.

Myth and yarn 5: *The industry did not suffer serious injury because it has operating income.*

Answer: Note that these organizations, in alleging that the industry has not suffered any injury, deceitfully refer to the industry's operating income, not its net financial bottom line. In 1999, the industry suffered a net loss of P5 billion when imports surged sharply and suddenly. In 2000, net losses soared to P7.5 billion.

Operating income is never a true measure of financial health. In any business, it is the net financial bottom line that counts rather than operating income. This is especially true for a capital intensive industry like cement where P5 to P6.2 billion is needed to establish one cement plant of medium capacity. Because of the large sums needed, loans from the banking system must be obtained and which must be paid. A capital intensive industry that has positive operating income but has negative net income is in a bad shape since it is not able to generate enough income to pay for its loans.

The importers, by focusing on operating income, also want to obscure the serious injury sustained by the industry in the form of revenues lost to imports. The 21% imports' market share represents a staggering P6.4 billion in lost revenues to the local industry for the first 3 quarters of 2001 alone. This is the real injury caused by imports to the industry that adversely affects the ability of the industry to meets its obligations.

Myth and yarn 6: *Cement workers lose their jobs because of modernization programs. The loss of jobs has nothing to do with imports.*

Answer: Since import surge began in 1999, the kilns that were shutdown were all new, modern and efficient dry kilns. Thus, it is not modernization that was the cause of the loss of employment but imports.

Employment in the local cement industry declined by 20.60% in 2001. This, curiously, is equivalent to the market lost by the industry because of the surge of imports.

The irony is, 97 of cement workers have paid more taxes than four of the biggest importers. These cement workers in La Union paid a total of P3.1 million in income taxes, as against the P950,000 paid by four big importers. This year, the cement workers of 12 applicant companies will pay about P154 million in taxes. These are the contributions that are at stake should imports be allowed to control the market.

It should also be noted that after the P20.60/bag provisional tariff was imposed, Continental cement plant that was closed before its imposition re-opened and employees who were already paid separation pay were called back to work. This only proves that safeguards are beneficial to cement workers.

Myth and yarn 7: *The imposition of safeguards will prevent cement imports from coming in.*

Answer: Imports still come in despite the imposition of safeguards. After the P20.60 provisional tariff was imposed, about 3.8 million bags of imported cement still entered the market. This earned the Government an estimated P78 million in safeguard tariffs that under the RA 8800 shall be used to help ailing local industries and agricultural producers. Even cement from Thailand, a new entrant in the Philippine market, entered the Philippines.

The industry, in asking for safeguards, is only asking for a level playing field. Imported cement, particularly from Indonesia, come in at P58 per bag, thereby undercutting local cement prices. A safeguard tariff would level the playing field and enable the industry to compete with imports under fair conditions.

Myth and yarn 8: *Safeguards will be abused.*

Answer: The Safeguard Measures Act has built-in mechanisms to prevent abuse. The safeguard measure is temporary (4 years) and may be reduced, taken away, or modified by the DTI Secretary, at any time, in the event that it is abused.

Also, as shown by the imposition of the P20.60 provisional tariff, the industry acted responsibly. Cement prices, contrary to the claims of importers and their allies, did not increase after its imposition but were in fact reduced by the various local companies in view of the prospect of recovering lost volumes as a result of a level playing field.

The cement industry commits to continue acting responsibly in the event definitive safeguards are imposed on imported cement. For unlike cement importers, the industry has never considered safeguards to be an issue of profitability but an issue of survival.

PHILIPPINE CEMENT MANUFACTURERS CORPORATION

Who should we send to the Asian Games?

"THERE will be no junketeers!" declared Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) Chair Eric Buhain, as he commits P30 million of the people's money to underwrite the cost of transportation and accommodation of 180 athletes to the Asian Games scheduled in Pusan, South Korea in September. That amount translates to P166,666.67 per athlete who will attempt to prove that he is not a junketeer by winning medals in his events. What are the chances of these athletes of not being classified as junketeers?

Based on past and present records, it may be concluded that most of them will be junketeers. In the 1998 Asian Games held in Bangkok, the Philippines fielded 252 athletes. Of this number only 20 athletes, (12 were from basketball which won the bronze medal) may be considered as non-junketeers. Those who won medals were: one gold in doubles billiards; five silver medals in golf, wushu and taekwondo; and 12 bronze medals in swimming, cycling, boxing and bowling. In other words, of the 252 athletes sent to the 1998 Asian Games, 230 or 91 percent were junketeers! And the fact that our performance in the last Southeast Asian Games (SEAG) held in Bangkok last year was the worst ever registered by our athletes who finished fifth place behind Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam, it may likewise be assumed that most of the 180 athletes identified to represent our country in the forthcoming Pusan Asian Games are potential junketeers, contrary to what Buhain would like us to believe.

The PSC-Philippine Olympic Committee task force assigned to identify athletes who will make up the delegation to the Pusan Asian Games prescribed a bronze medal finish in last year's SEAG as the minimum qualifying standard. This qualifying standard will surely make junketeers of most of the athletes who will go to Pusan because their third place personal records, when compared with their counterparts from non-SEAG countries such as China, Japan and South Korea, will not even enable them to make it to the quarterfinals. In other words, most of those who will qualify for membership in the delegation are the best in the lowest level of international competition, the best among the worst, so to speak.

It would have been better if the task force prescribed the qualifying standards based on existing Asian Games records vis-à-vis the personal records of athletes in their respective events rather than on the medal finish. It is possible that a gold medal record in the SEAG may just be ranked among the top 20 in the Asian Games.

However, sports officials want to have more athletes included in the delegation because the more athletes who will go, the number of officials will likewise increase. It will therefore be prudent for Buhain to prescribe a guideline in the allocation of the P30 million of taxpayers' money he committed to the POC, whose counterpart fund is only P5 million, that only those athletes whose personal records are within the top six in their respective events will be subsidized through this amount. All other potential junketeers should be financed by the concerned national sports associations.

And the savings realized therefrom, Buhain can allocate for the purchase of sports equipment for schoolchildren's physical education and sports activities.

—APARICIO H. MEQUI., president, Philippine Association of Physical Educators Inc. (PAPE), 109 Valenzuela St., UP Diliman, Quezon City

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Court frees Nigeria woman sentenced to die by stoning

SOKOTO, Nigeria—A Nigerian mother who had been sentenced to die by stoning was freed on Monday—but almost immediately afterward officials revealed another woman has received the same sentence.

The case of 35-year-old Safiya Hussaini Tungar-Tudu, who was condemned to death by a sharia court for adultery, had sparked international outrage.

Even as the mother of five smiled with relief in the northern city of Sokoto, officials said that on Friday another woman had been sentenced to death by stoning for having sex outside marriage in the village of Bakori in Katsina state.

Amina Lawal Kurami was charged with having a baby out of wedlock. "The sentence was based on her own confession and the evidence of the baby she had," an official said by telephone. She has 30 days to challenge the sentence.

"The man she said lured her into having sex denied it," the official said.

The judge acquitted the man because she could not produce four witnesses as demanded by the Islamic penal code. ***Reuters***

Israel agrees to truce proposals

JERUSALEM—Israel said Tuesday it agreed in principle to US proposals for a ceasefire with the Palestinians, but still saw little reason to allow Yasser Arafat to attend an Arab summit in Beirut.

The Israelis had set establishment of an effective truce as a condition for lifting travel restrictions on the Palestinian leader so he could take part in Arab deliberations opening Wednesday on a Saudi peace initiative.

A senior aide to Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said the government had given its accord in principle to compromise ceasefire proposals laid out by US envoy Anthony Zinni but sought clarification on certain points.

But after Israeli officials accused the Palestinians of scuttling an expected round of negotiations Monday, they were cool to the idea of releasing Arafat from nearly four months of confinement on the West Bank.

"Up to now, conditions are not right to allow Arafat to travel abroad," said a Cabinet official who asked not be named.

"He has given no orders to his police to fight terrorism and he continues to incite violence.

"If he changes his attitude, we will re-examine the question," the official said. Although the government had said it would decide Tuesday, the official said no Cabinet meeting on the issue was scheduled.

But cracks appeared in the government stand as Defense Minister Binyamin Ben Eliezer told Israeli military radio that Arafat should be free to go, and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said in Beijing no decision had yet been taken.

Israel has come under pressure from the United States and other quarters to let Arafat join the summit, which will discuss the Saudi initiative to offer Israel a peace treaty in return for its withdrawal from occupied land. ***AFP***

37 journalists killed in 2001

WASHINGTON—The number of journalists killed last year rose to 37 from 24 the year before, partly because of the war in Afghanistan, a US press group says.

Eight journalists were killed in Afghanistan in 2001, the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists says in its annual report, to be released Tuesday.

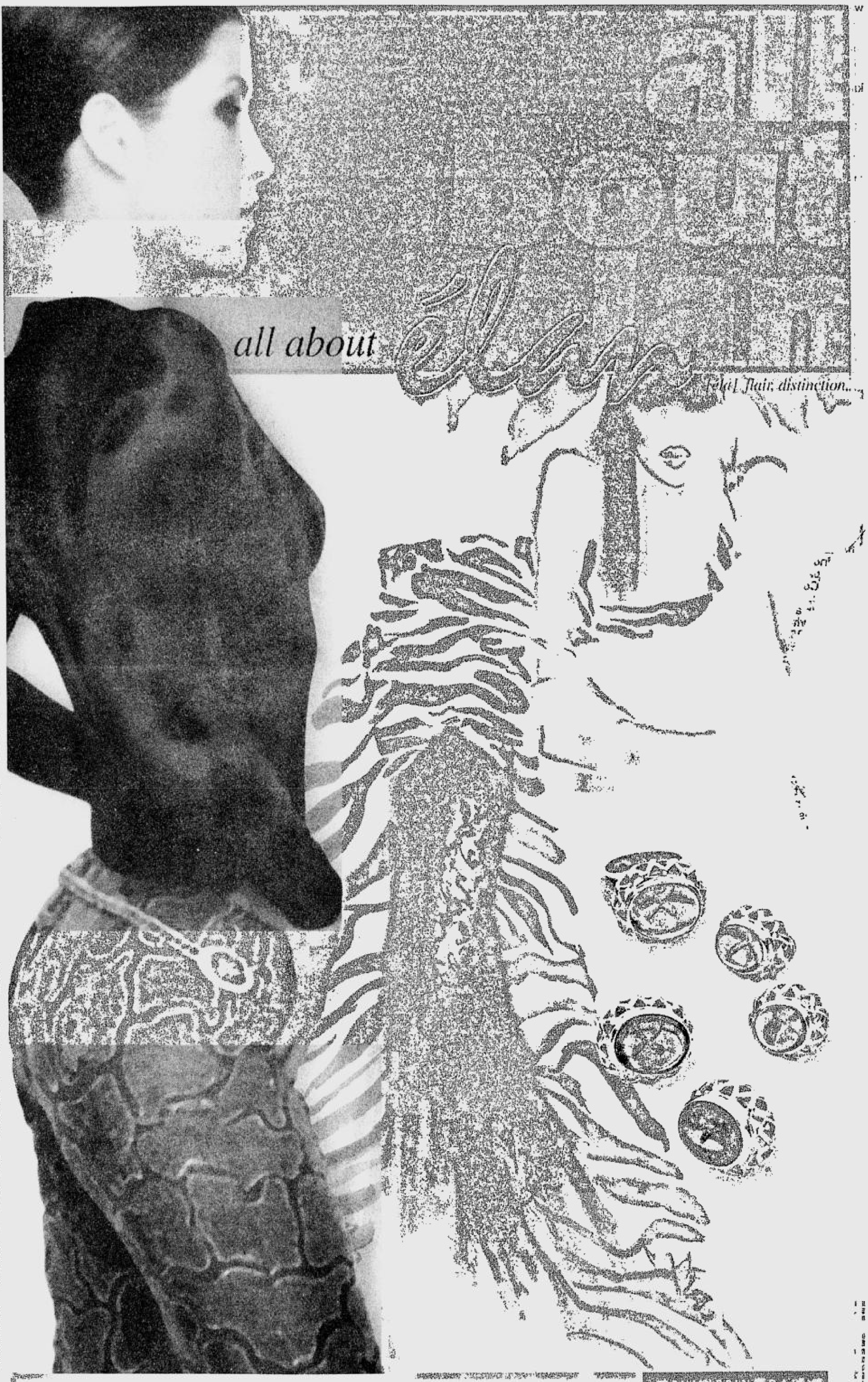
But most of the journalists killed worldwide were not covering wars or other conflicts, the group said. Instead, they were murdered in reprisal for their reporting on sensitive topics, such as official crime and corruption.

In addition, the number of journalists in prison jumped nearly 50 percent—to 118 in 2001 from 81 the year before, the report said. That increase reversed four years of steady decline.

Much of the increase resulted from crackdowns in Eritrea and Nepal. In addition, China, already the world's leading jailer of journalists for the third year in a row, arrested eight more, ending the year with 35 journalists behind bars, the report said.

In all, nine journalists died in Afghanistan, including one who died of injuries suffered in 1999. Three journalists were killed in Colombia, and two each were killed in Algeria, the Philippines, Thailand, the United States and Yugoslavia.

One journalist was killed in each of the following countries: Bangladesh, Bolivia, China, Costa Rica, Georgia, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Latvia, Mexico, the Palestinian territories, Paraguay, Russia, Ukraine and the United Kingdom. ***AP***



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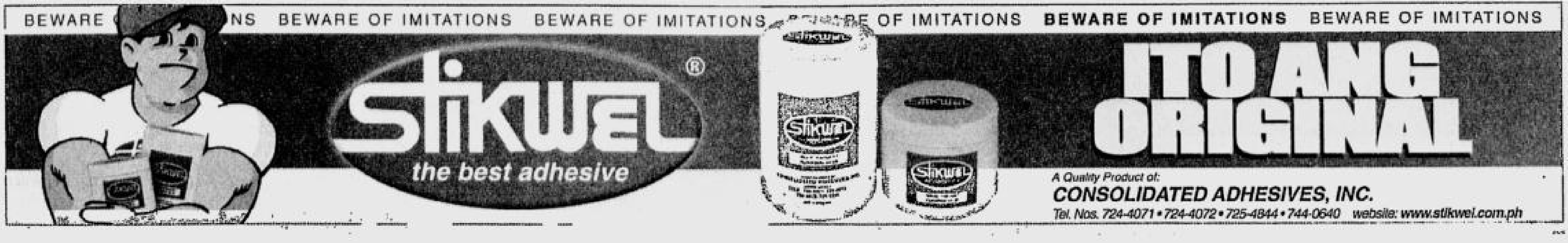
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Africa to launch radical plan

ABUJA—A summit of African leaders in Nigeria on Tuesday is due to endorse an unprecedented declaration on democracy and good governance in the hope of paving the way for big Western investment into the continent.

The 15 heads of state gathered in Abuja form the implementation committee of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad), a home-grown initiative for rapid growth in the world's poorest continent.

The initiative is being likened by its authors to the Marshall Plan that helped rebuild Europe after World War II.

The political declaration is seen by Nepad officials as the most important guarantee of Western economic support for the plan, which estimates Africa needs some $64 billion of investment inflows annually to ensure sustainable growth.

"It is important that African leaders restore people's confidence in Africa's leadership," said Wiseman Nkuhlu, chair of Nepad's steering committee and special economic adviser to South African President Thabo Mbeki.

"It is also important to win the confidence of the international community," Nkuhlu said in Abuja.

He reacted angrily to a warning by the United States that overwhelming African endorsement of Zimbabwe's controversial presidential election could hurt Western support for Nepad.

"We take exception to that kind of position that countries like the United States are taking," Nkuhlu said.

"African countries are doing this because they think it's the right thing to do. For Africans to be dictated to like this is simply irritating."

Nkuhlu said the lack of Western-style democracy in some Asian countries did not stop US investors putting money there.

"And why should 53 other African countries be held to ransom for the action of one country?" he asked.

Organizers said Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe would not be attending the summit.

The draft document notably commits African governments to:

- Adhere to the principles of democracy, the rule of law and the strict separation of powers, including the independence of the judiciary and of effective parliaments and
- Ensure an active and independent civil society that can hold government accountable to the people It also commits African leaders to ensure a free press, an independent judiciary and a dedicated and efficient civil service, to eradicate corruption and respect human rights.

Political analysts said that by even agreeing to discuss such issues, previously judged as strictly domestic affairs, African leaders showed they were becoming more pragmatic in a world of shrinking national boundaries.

Part of the declaration includes provision for a monitoring mechanism and a warning "yellow card" for leaders who fail to perform. The document says the African Peer Review Mechanism is to enhance African ownership of its development agenda. ***Reuters***

Argentina peso sinks to historic low

BUENOS AIRES—Argentina's embattled peso plummeted to record lows on Monday as thousands snapped up dollars to protect their savings, fueling speculation President Eduardo Duhalde's government could fall.

Some sat in lawn chairs in massive lines at downtown banks, waiting to change money, as inflation fears sent the peso 14 percent lower to close at 3.60 per dollar after touching 4.00 earlier in the session. The currency has lost over two thirds of its value since a devastating four-year recession forced a devaluation in early January.

New Central Bank measures virtually forcing banks to trade at official buy and sell rates, rather than rates set by the market, did little to stem the panic buying of dollars as price rises swelled in basic goods like meat and gasoline.

"I've been here since 6 a.m. and I'm ready to pay whatever it takes," said Susana, 41, as she waited in drizzle outside an exchange bureau. "I need a hundred dollars to make a payment on my house and I'm not going to miss it for anything."

Argentines banged on bank doors and some even skipped school in desperate bids to buy the safe-haven dollar. Black market traders whispered latest rates in the ears of passersby as crowds swarmed around the city's financial center. ***Reuters***

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WORLDBRIEFS

US to train Afghan Army

WASHINGTON—US troops will soon begin helping train an Afghan national army in an effort to stabilize a country split by warlord factions and decades of combat, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld said on Monday. The Pentagon said 125 to 150 special forces troops would initiate the effort to provide "basic soldier skills" to Afghan national and border forces within four to six weeks. The training would include loyalty to a central government. Air Force Gen. Richard Myers, chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a news conference with Rumsfeld the American training force could reach the "low hundreds" initially but that plans were not complete. Rumsfeld gave no cost estimate for the Afghan Army or the training, already being undertaken by British troops. But he said Washington would press other nations to help pay for raising an army, considered a key to stability in unsettled Afghanistan. ***Reuters***

AIDS drug for women

JOHANNESBURG—A high court judge ruled on Monday that South Africa must provide women with an anti-AIDS drug that cuts the risk they will pass the deadly virus to their babies. The government, which has been widely condemned for refusing to expand a Nevirapine pilot program to all pregnant women on cost and safety grounds, had appealed against a ruling ordering it to provide the drug while it takes its case to the Constitutional Court. The Pretoria High Court ruled in December the government had a constitutional duty to widen access to Nevirapine, which has been shown to cut mother-to-child infection rates by up to 50 percent. ***Reuters***

Sokor strikers stormed

SEOUL—Thousands of riot police stormed a university campus and detained hundreds of union protesters Monday as power companies started sacking workers who have been on strike for a month. The police operation began just after midnight after about 3,200 workers gathered at Seoul's Yonsei University for a sit-in protest against plans to privatize debt-stricken state electricity firms. Ten people were injured in clashes across the campus, but most workers fled into nearby mountains, union leaders said. Police said 381 workers were detained. The raid by 4,000 riot police followed clashes Sunday outside the campus. Hundreds of students and labor activists hurled firebombs and rocks at police. ***AFP***

Russians, Chechens talk

MOSCOW—Russian lawmakers have begun a dialogue with Chechen political figures in hopes of restarting contacts between the Kremlin and Chechen separatists, participants said Monday. The Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly and the Duma, Russia's lower house of parliament, organized a forum, called the Chechen Consultative Council, which had its first meeting in Moscow last week. The forum has not been endorsed by President Vladimir Putin, nor did the Kremlin-backed civilian Chechen administration or rebel Chechen president Aslan Maskhadov send representatives to the meeting. Nonetheless, participants said they hope the dialogue, however modest, would create a framework for the resumption of direct contacts between the Kremlin and Maskhadov's camp, which have been on hold since last fall. ***AP***

UK postmen to lose jobs

LONDON—British postal operator Consignia announced 15,000 job cuts Monday as part of efforts to staunch losses of over one million pounds a day and prepare the 300-year-old, state-owned group for greater competition from private firms. Consignia said that the measures were the first step in a three-year restructuring program aimed at slashing costs by more than 1.2 billion pounds (2.0 billion euros, $1.7 billion a year. The group, formerly known as The Post Office, warned in December that as many as 30,000 jobs from its 200,000-strong workforce might eventually have to go. "Consignia is in a perilous position, losing more than 1.5 million pounds every day," said Consignia chair Allan Leighton. ***AFP***

Second UN-Iraq meeting

UNITED NATIONS—UN Secretary General Kofi Annan will hold a second meeting with Iraqi Foreign Minister Naji Sabri next month, furthering UN efforts to return weapons inspectors to Iraq. UN spokesperson Fred Eckhard said the two will meet April 18-19 at UN headquarters in New York, but declined to give further details of what would be on the agenda. Sabri and Annan last held talks March 7 on the possible return of UN arms inspectors to Iraq and had agreed at the time to meet again in mid-April. "We believe the meeting should be short and in focus," a US diplomat told AFP Monday. "We are supportive of the efforts of the Secretary General to let inspectors return. We don't believe it should be a long process." ***AFP***

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Judge orders arrest of 200 rebels who killed 7 soldiers

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—A Regional Trial Court judge has issued arrest warrants against some 200 members of the New People's Army who allegedly participated in last year's raid on an Army detachment in a hinterland village of Samar.

Judge Sinforiano Monsanto of RTC Branch 29 in Catbalogan, Samar, issued the arrest warrants on March 15 against the rebels who were charged with robbery with multiple homicide.

The communist guerrillas were accused of killing seven soldiers and taking away government property worth P167,000.

The court has ordered all police stations in Samar to arrest the accused after it found probable cause to issue the warrants of arrest and sufficient evidence against them.

Docketed as Criminal Case No. 5300, the Samar prosecutor's office filed the case in court on Jan. 11. The Philippine Army acted as the complainant in the case.

Of the 200 rebels charged in the case, only 35 persons were identified in the arrest warrant.

Among the suspects were Naning Laboc alias "Payong;" Carlito Salingsing alias "Terado;" Amado Adelantar alias "Butil;" Abenido Buhina alias "Nido;" Loreto Dacanay alias "Soleng;" Felimon Gabane alias "Gady;" Pabling Rebato alias "Tapar;" Panfilo Gabin alias "Enen;" and Hilario Mabanan alias "Yayong."

The case was filed as a result of an early morning raid conducted by the NPA rebels on an Army detachment in Barangay Babaclayon, San Jose de Buan, Samar, about 5:30 a.m. on Feb. 12, 2001.

The firefight lasted for about two hours, resulting in the death of seven soldiers and the wounding of five others belonging to the Alpha Company of the Army's 34th Infantry Battalion.

Killed during the NPA attack were Staff Sgt. Ruben Quitalig, Staff Sgt. Lucero de Guzman, Sgt. Gildy Jordan, Pfc. Gil Fabregaras, Pfc. Rogelio Romano, Pfc. Rudy Apolonio, and Pfc. Ricky Opena.

Wounded were Staff Sgt. Eugenio Balasbas, Staff Sgt. Wilfredo Colis, Sgt. Rolando Rios, Sgt. Armando Labine and Cpl. Samuel Cabute. Balasbas was the detachment commander then.

Among the items allegedly taken by the suspects were a radio set worth P25,000, a caliber 7.6-mm gun worth P8,000, an M203 grenade launcher worth P15,000, seven cal. 5.56-mm M-16 rifles with a total cost of P63,000; and seven cal. 7.62mm M-14 rifles worth P56,000.

AFP paper says Malampaya pipeline not terror-proof

BATANGAS CITY—The Malampaya gas pipeline is not terror-proof.

Lt. Senior Grade Florante Nagua, assistant chief for strategy and policy of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, said in a paper that the security forces guarding the pipeline are not completely equipped to prevent any terrorist attack on the pipeline.

Nagua's paper said should terrorists attack the pipeline, a region-wide catastrophe that would cause damages to Palawan up to Mindoro and Batangas could occur.

The Joint Security Force guarding the project is composed of personnel of the AFP, the Philippine National Police, and Shell Philippines security forces.

President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier ordered tight security on the project sites in three provinces.

In his position paper, Nagua said, "securing the exclusion and safety zones requires control of the surfaces, sub-surfaces and air spaces in the area in order to detect and identify traffic, and prevent, repel, or destroy hostile intrusion."

Unfortunately, the Philippine Air Force still does not have the aircraft that could monitor the Camago-Malampaya pipeline from Palawan to Batangas.

The Philippine Navy also does not have fast seacraft that could watch over the restricted zones.

The PAF still has no electronic sensors that could detect any moving object in the air or in the sea within the 504-kilometer restricted area around the project.

Supt. Rolando Lorenzo, Batangas police director, said they have stepped up patrols around the pipeline and tightened security.

He said five policemen were sent to the First Gas power plant in Sta. Rita and 15 policemen were sent to the Keilco power plant in Ilijan.

"By land, the terrorists won't have a chance."

David Greer, Shell-Malampaya Gas-to-Power Project managing director, said a terrorist attack on the pipeline area is simply impossible.

"How can the terrorists find the pipeline? Where is the pipeline? Nobody knows where it is except our engineers. And the submarine pipelines are over 600 meters underwater," Greer said.

After four years of constructing the 508-km submarine pipeline from Palawan to Batangas where the natural gas passes through, Greer will leave the country for other projects abroad.

The natural gas pipeline is the largest in the world.

The Malampaya gas-to-power project has made the country one of the world's major gas producers since its official operation on Oct. 16 last year.

The Philippine government will get $8 billion from the project in the next 20 years. ***Mei Magsino, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Miners set up blockade on bridge linking 2 cities

DAVAO CITY—Tension grips Carmen town in Davao del Norte as some 4,000 small-scale miners, their wives and children barricaded the Bincungan Bridge to protest an order to close their gold processing factories.

The demand for the lifting of a Cease and Desist Order (CDO) against gold ore processing in Diwalwal, Mt. Diwata in Monkayo, Compostela Valley, is threatening to escalate.

The miners placed trunks of ipil-ipil trees, a towing vehicle and tents for women and children in the middle of the bridge, causing traffic.

About 1,000 small-scale miners and their families from Diwalwal started to mass up at the Bincungan Bridge starting 2 p.m. Monday.

As of yesterday morning, traffic continues to build up as more miners are expected to arrive. The miners said they would not leave the bridge until the government gives in to their demand to lift the order issued last year by Monkayo Mayor Joel Brilliantes.

The Bincungan Bridge is vital as it connects the cities of Tagum and Davao.

This is the third time in five years that the miners staged a barricade. In the past, the miners blocked the Kalaw Bridge in Monkayo town.

On Monday night, negotiations between Davao del Norte Gov. Rodolfo del Rosario and the miners were held in a bid to convince the miners to leave the bridge.

Del Rosario said the miners must give way and allow vehicles to pass through the bridge as a condition for Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez and Interior Secretary Joey Lina to hold a dialogue with them.

Early yesterday, the miners said they would leave the bridge only if they see Lina or Alvarez in person. The miners said they would also like to see the order rescinded.

Brilliantes issued the order in December last year. Brilliantes owns JB Management Corp., a mining firm.

The order, said Brilliantes, was issued to stop the contamination of the Naboc River by toxic wastes coming from the operation of gold plants in Diwalwal.

JB has a big stake in the 729-hectare Diwalwal mining area. Small-scale miners accused Brilliantes of issuing the order to protect his interest in Diwalwal. JB is reportedly entering into a partnership with Southeast Mining Corp. and Marcopper Mines.

In an interview with radio station dxDC yesterday, Del Rosario said he has no authority to lift the order or tell Brilliantes to do so because he has no direct contact with the mayor.

Monkayo is under the jurisdiction of Compostela Valley, not Davao del Norte.

Compostela Valley Gov. Jose Caballero is also convening his crisis management committee to work out a "win-win" solution.

Last month, the miners asked the Regional Trial Court in Nabunturan, Compostela Valley, to declare the order null and void and asked the court to stop its enforcement.

The miners also asked the court to declare illegal the padlocking by Brilliantes of their buildings and factories on Mt. Diwata.

On March 18, the court denied the petition of the miners.

Another group of miners, Bulbscor Minerals Corp. and Blucor Minerals Corp., also filed another case in Tagum City. The court in Tagum City also dismissed the petition since the same case was filed with Nabunturan courts.

The Bureau of Mines and Geosciences (BMG) will push for the transfer of the processing plants in Mt. Diwata, Monkayo, to stop pollution, but not before legal problems affecting the gold rush area are resolved by the Supreme Court.

Ma. Luisa Jacinto, BMG chief for Southern Mindanao, also raised concerns over the effects of a transfer of the processing plants on the livelihood of the miners.

Jacinto said the BMG could push the transfer anytime but there are problems that should be addressed by the government before it is done.

The new zone is about 20 kilometers from the existing plants.

"We will face bigger problems once we push the transfer of the processing plants that are socio and economic," Jacinto said.

There are 396 ball mills in Diwalwal which are using the blow torch process that uses mercury in recovering gold and 61 small and less polluting Cyanide-in-Pulp (CIP) processing plants. A mini-CIP can process 150 tons of ore per day.

Aside from the many families that would be displaced, downstream industries would also be affected.

But Jacinto said many of the small-scale mining operators were hesitant on transferring their plants because of the loss of investments once there is a ruling of the Supreme Court. ***Ayan C. Mellejor and Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

MINERS converge on the Bincungan Bridge.

BING GONZALES

'LUKEWARM' POLICE

Solon seeks justice for slain Robin Padilla brother

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—House Minority Leader Carlos Padilla has asked the help of the Philippine National Police and the National Bureau of Investigation to give justice to his slain nephew, movie bit player Rodolfo "Gino" Padilla.

Representative Padilla said he called up PNP Director General Leandro Mendoza and NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco after the victim's mother, Jenny Serafica, told him of the "lukewarm response" of the Cuyapo police to a request to focus on the case.

The congressman is the third cousin of former Camarines Norte Gov. Roy Padilla Sr., the victim's father.

The bullet-ridden remains of Rodolfo Padilla, half-brother of actor Robin Padilla, were exhumed last Saturday in Pantabangan town, 15 days after he was abducted by armed men from his farm in Cuyapo, Nueva Ecija.

The decomposing body was first found in a ravine in Barangay Cadaclan in Pantabangan on March 14. But Pantabangan officials ordered the decomposing body to be buried after it was not identified and nobody had claimed it.

The body was later identified based on Rodolfo Padilla's dental records and some of the belongings found by police.

A land dispute involving Serafica's family is being eyed as one of the possible motives in the killing. But Representative Padilla said he does not want to preempt the police investigation.

At least seven men came to Padilla's farm on March 8 and took him. His caretaker, Sixto de Gracia, 71, was shot and killed after he tried to help Padilla.

Before leaving, the suspects burned the farmhouse, the victim's Mitsubishi Lancer and a mini-tractor all worth more than P1 million.

The belongings of Padilla were identified by his live-in partner, Madonna Mendoza, according to SPO3 Leon Domine.

Padilla's remains were taken to Manila by his relatives.

Pictures taken of the remains of the person buried in Pantabangan and some of the belongings found were shown to Mendoza, who identified them as belonging to the missing Padilla.

Padilla was a resident of Barangay Bibiclat in Cuyapo. He was developing a 17-hectare area in the barangay for mango growing and *tilapia* culture. The village is 8 km from the town proper.

Aban said they were looking into land dispute as a motive for the abduction and killing.

'Caloy' leaves 25 dead in 2 Surigao del Sur towns

TANDAG, Surigao del Sur—Twenty-five persons, most of them children, were killed while three others were reported missing when a flash flood hit three barangays in San Miguel and Bayabas towns on Thursday night.

Thirteen persons were killed in Barangay Libas Sud, five others in Barangay Buhisan, both in San Miguel, and another in Barangay Panaosawon in Bayabas town. All the victims drowned.

San Miguel Mayor Santos Nacaytuna failed to immediately enter the town as the flooding continued until Friday.

The Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council (PDCC) identified the victims in Barangay Libas Sur as Mentay, 68; Yonie, 27; Eurelyn, 5; Jay-ar, 2; Jovelyn, 3; Yonivic, 3; Nicanor, 26; Jessa Mae, 5; Mark Jason, 1; Criza, 7; May-May, 7; Beato, 64; all surnamed Montenegro; and 2 month-old Michelle Joy Miranda.

In Barangay Buhisan, killed were Jeffrey, 4; Genalyn, 3; and 5-month-old Jenelyn, all surnamed Enriquez; and Gina Gomez, 12.

An additional list identified the other fatalities as Marcelina Artoque, 30, of Bayabas; Homboy Pagalan, 80, of Lianga; Nerio Ayad, 45, of San Miguel; Julie Medrano, year-old, and Reynaldo Madrano, 18, of San Miguel and Aisa Avila, 5, of San Agustin.

In Barangay Panaosawon, killed was 6-month-old Gemma Rose Artoque.

The PDCC said the damages to infrastructure and agriculture reached P70 million.

Typhoon "Caloy" hit 29 barangays in Surigao del Sur affecting 1,671 families or 9,021 persons. A total of 118 houses were destroyed while at least 880 others were damaged.

In Surigao City, at least seven motorboats docked at the city's main port in Barangay Bilang-Bilang capsized when whipped by huge waves.

Last January flash floods also swept through Davao City, although they were not as destructive.

Thousands were displaced in the two Davao provinces when floodwaters steadily rose.

Carmelito Lupo, executive officer of the Regional Disaster Coordinating Council, said at least 20 areas in Davao City were submerged in waist-deep water.

The hardest hit was Jade Valley Village in Tigatto District in Davao as the Davao River swelled.

Residents climbed on their roofs, the Philippine Navy used rubber boats to rescue people.

Traffic was stalled in many parts of Davao City as officials ordered the closure of the Bankerohan Bridge.

City officials said they feared the collapse of the bridge as floodwaters continued to rise.

The flood caused the collapse of the Ma-a Bridge.

The military was asked to provide helicopters to rescue residents on their roofs.

Schools and offices had to be closed.

Mayor Rodrigo Duterte was forced to convene the city council to declare a state of calamity in the city. ***Mark M. Quico with a report from Franklin Caliguid, PDI Mindanao Bureau***

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The entire country willexperience partly cloudy to attimes cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers. Light to moderate winds blowing from the east and southeast will prevail over the entire archipelago and coastal waters will be slight to moderate source: pagasa

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Hl35° Lo24°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hl 27°Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hl 35° Lo 22°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hl 33° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Hl 34° Lo 24°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hl 32° Lo 22°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hl 32° Lo 25°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hl 32° Lo 24°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hl 33° Lo 24°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hl 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hl 32° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Hl 32° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	Hl 34° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	Hl 34° Lo 24°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Hl 32° Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Hl 32° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Armin P. Adina, PDI Research/03/26/02

INQUIRER *Northern Luzon*

Editor **Jun Bandayrel** ● *Bureau Chief* **Rolando B. Fernandez**

Faith and fraud in Cutud rituals

By Tonette Orejas

City of San Fernando

CRUCIFIXION and flagellation in San Pedro Cutud in the City of San Fernando in Pampanga are done beyond superficial reenactment. Although an aberration in the Catholic world, these bloody Lenten rituals have persisted in the last five decades, briefly interrupted only by Mt. Pinatubo's eruptions and lahar flows in 1991.

Despite admonition from the Catholic Church, these practices continue because the pious still seek divine comfort and await miracles while the sacrilegious use these as fronts for machismo and worst, as business enterprises.

RUBEN Enaje refuses to yield to the pain of being nailed to the cross. He has steadfastly held onto his crucifixion, his *panata* (devotion) for the last 15 years and for the next five years because it has given him and his family "so much blessings (*dakal a pasalamat*)."

And in terms not material. "It deepened my faith in the Lord, gave me peace of mind amid poverty and shielded me and my family from harm," he explains in Kapampangan.

He also attributes the jobs that came after a long lull to the work of the divine. "He provides, never failing to care," this 41-year-old house painter utters almost meditatively while he puts the finishing touches on three huge, wooden crosses that are going to be used alternately by him and 10 other penitents on Good Friday.

Enaje is not only this year's main Kristo, the man who is going to reenact Christ's route to Calvary or in the village's case, at Purok Kuwatro where a hill was made out of compacted lahar.

This man, who only finished grade school, also assembles the crosses, paints and retouches a huge sketch of Christ's face and makes the *tandus* (the spears of the Centurions) in between painting houses, making signs, fixing bikes and parenting chores.

To him, though, these are still not enough forms of thanksgiving and sacrifice. Enaje took to the crucifixion rite in 1985 a year after he fell from a three-story building.

"I survived without a scratch," he recalls, hastening to add it was a "miracle."

"I don't know of any other way to thank the Lord but to emulate his suffering," Enaje says.

As his brood grew, his prayers included those for the safety and health of his wife and four children. So far, nobody has gotten sick in the family despite the bout with poverty, he says.

Zoilo Castro, barangay captain of San Pedro Cutud, believes that in Enaje's case, blessings have really poured.

"He's able to survive life's hardship because of his faith in God and because he is hardworking," Castro says of Enaje.

Rolando Ocampo, a 46-year-old construction worker, also won't let go of the painful practice. He has been at it for the last 10 years to save his frail daughter, his youngest, from ailment and harm.

Unlike Enaje and the others, he prefers to be crucified at past 3 p.m. when the huge, noisy crowd at Cutud has left.

"I want to be alone so I could say my prayers more intently," Ocampo explains.

Enaje, as this year's main Kristo, has no choice but to lead the reenactment and the throng of some 500 flagellants, which are a rare feature in Cutud's Via Cruzis.

Favors, mercy

Other men also seek favor through crucifixion. Victor Caparas, a food vendor, believes his prayers for a better life had been heard.

He wears a tattoo of the Virgin Mary and two cherubs in his upper back.

"My guardians," he says of the images.

Chito Sangalang, Cutud's main Kristo for 15 years until last year, said his crucifixion has lengthened the life of his tuberculosis-stricken mother.

Mario Castro and Boy Juaning completed their devotion five years ago when their loved ones were cured from serious ailments. For Medardo Pabustan, the crucifixion was his way of purging sins and reconciling with the Lord.

Arnel Sangalang, a baker, and Jesus Garcia, a driver, have been into the *panata* for their families' well-being.

"*Magpakalunus* (Seeking mercy)," Garcia says of the tradition he has held fast onto for 12 years.

Sham

Some get crucified outside of Cutud to get paid, according to Enaje, who does not approve of the wrongdoing.

And the consequences are really harsh, Castro warns.

"*E la mamangat king bie. Guguyud la pa mu rin* (Their lives don't improve. They're unable to rise from hardships)," he says, identifying several men who made profits from the crucifixion rite. "Bad karma struck them and their families."

Enaje says quite a few have lost their sanity and have been punished through bad fortunes.

Even flagellation (*pamagparaya*), the rite of slitting one's back and whipping this until blood profusely spurts, has lost its prayerful features.

Gone are the days when flagellants (*mandarame*) would devote the entire Maundy Thursday for *sakab* or *salibatbat* (embracing the hot grounds) while contemplating on their sins and recalling Christ's sufferings.

Departing from tradition, penitents turn rowdy as they drown themselves in beer and gin, purportedly to let the blood gush freely.

It used to be that penitents retreat into their homes for silent prayers. Starving to atone for their sins, the diet of penitents only consisted of Sarsi cola mixed with fresh eggs.

Enaje, who grew up seeing his grandfather, father, uncles and brothers whip themselves no end, observes that these days, flagellation is "*yabang namu* (done to brag)."

He reckons that out of 100 men, only three have religious intentions. The rest, according to him, join it as a rite of manhood.

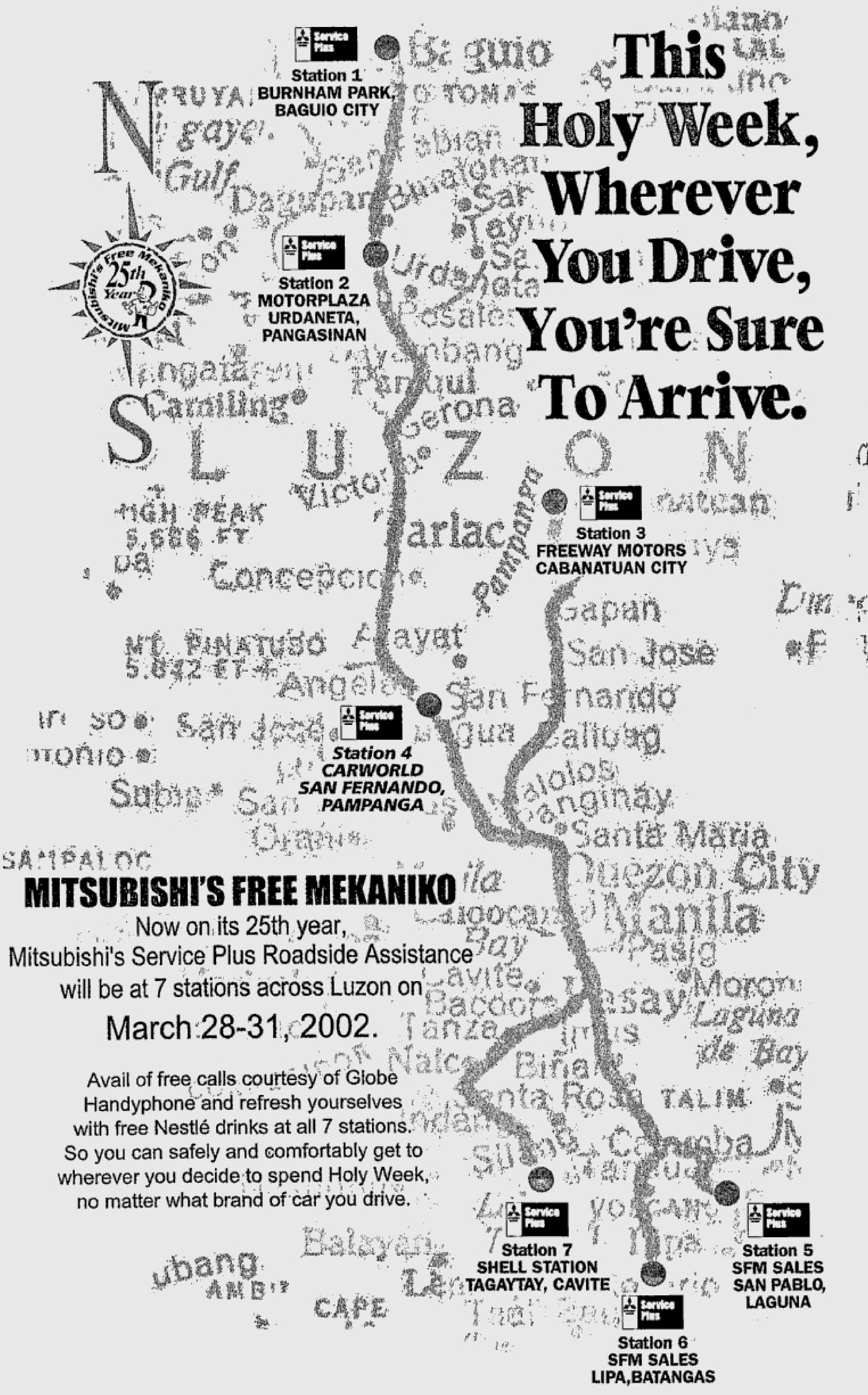
"*Ala king pilubluban da. Itang* [illegible] *ing importante karela ali ing pangadi* (They're not sincere about it. What's important to them is that they are able to display courage, not prayers)," he says.

Distortions

Fr. Alvin Manalang, who served the parish for many years, says he believes that these Lenten practices have diminished in purpose and meaning.

He says these practices have largely been reduced to a theater spectacle because local government and past tourism officials have systematically organized and promoted these.

PENITENCE in Cutud—spectacle or religious rite? GIORGIA FLORIO



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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

Fox News says $3M paid for Burnhams' release

From page A1

In its report, Fox News said that US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as well as officials from the state department and Federal Bureau of Investigation would not comment on the alleged $3 million in ransom payment.

Wild story

The Fox News report was strongly denied by Malacañang.

"This is a very wild story coming from sources in the Pentagon," National Security Adviser Roilo Golez said.

Golez said he had talked with the "right people" from the US Embassy in Manila as well as from the state department in Washington and "they deny this categorically."

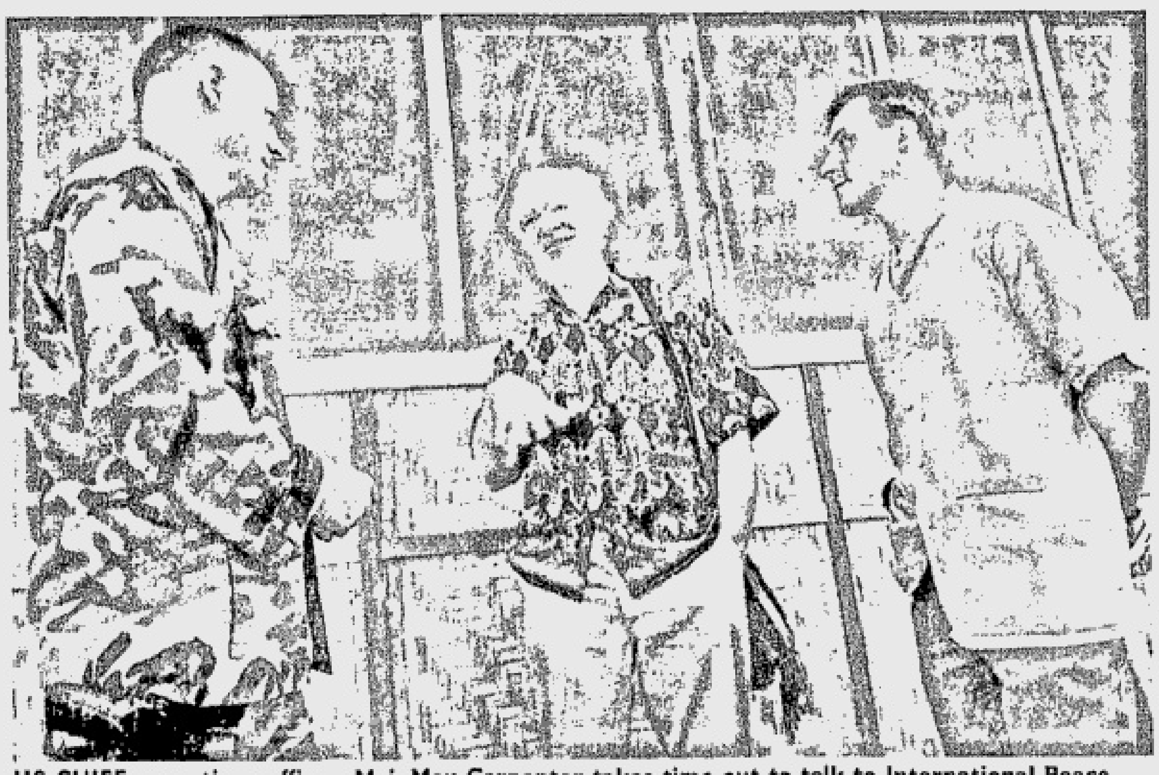
Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said the report was false. "We stand by our policy that we don't condone ransom payments," Tiglao said.

He stressed that government forces hunting down Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan would continue operations throughout the Lenten season to rescue the Burnhams and Filipino nurse Ediborah Yap.

US Embassy spokesperson Karen Kelly said that the US government would "make no concessions" to hostage takers but would use "every appropriate resource to gain the safe return of American citizens who are held hostage."

"It is the US government policy to deny hostage takers the benefits of ransom," Kelly said over ABS-CBN.

Golez clarified that based on his recent conversation with State Assistant Secretary James Kelly, the Unite States had not modified its policy on hostage takers.



EDWIN BACASMAS

US CHIEF operations officer, Maj. Max Carpenter takes time out to talk to International Peace Mission delegates, Earl Martin and Marco Mereza at the 103rd Brigade in Tabiawan, Basilan.

The US policy continues to be one of denying ransom, prisoner exchanges and other forms of concessions, according to Golez. "This jibes with Philippine policy," he said.

The Burnhams of Wichita, Kansas, were among the 20 hostages taken by the Abu Sayyaf from a Palawan resort on May 27, 2001.

A third American, Guillermo Sobero of Corona, California, was beheaded by the bandits in June as a grisly Independence Day "gift" to the Macapagal administration.

Golez said the United States was conducting DNA tests on panties and hair strands found in a brush recently recovered by Filipino troops in Lantawan, Basilan, to confirm whether these belonged to Gracia Burnham.

Philippine troops also found bras and toothbrushes after an encounter on Saturday with Abu Sayyaf bandits.

Golez said the recovery was a "very encouraging sign" that government forces were closing in on the area where the three hostages were being kept.

Rumsfeld mum

It its report, Fox News noted that the 17 other hostages taken with the Burnhams "are now free, either because ransom was paid, they managed to escape or were released by the rebels."

Among them was property developer Reghis Romero II, who was freed along with his girlfriend and a teenaged hostage in the middle of a firefight in Lamitan, Basilan, after ransom amounting to millions of pesos was supposedly paid to the bandits.

The young hostage RJ Recio later recounted that he, Romero and another hostage were "freed" by the gunmen because they paid ransom. ***With a report from Reuters***

2 US senators arriving next week

By Carlito Pablo
and Christine Herrera

AMERICAN Senators Daniel Inouye (Democrat, Hawaii) and Ted Stevens (Republican, Alaska) will visit the country next week to assess the RP-US military exercises aimed at wiping out Abu Sayyaf bandits in Basilan and at rescuing two American hostages.

"The two senators will be here to evaluate the conduct of Balikatan 02-1," presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said.

But Foreign Undersecretary Franklin Ebdalin said the visit was related to US military assistance to the Philippines.

"The Philippines is the 8th and last stop of the two US senators' Southeast Asian swing to assess regional security that will be used by the US Senate as basis to grant military assistance for the region," Ebdalin said.

Inouye is the chair of the US Senate subcommittee on defense, while Stevens is one of its members. The two, who are also members of the US Senate appropriations committee, will hold consultations with Philippine officials on April 1-3.

They are scheduled to meet with President Macapagal-Arroyo, Vice President Teofisto Guingona Jr., Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes, National Security Adviser Roilo Golez, the top brass of the Armed Forces of the Philippines and their counterparts in the Senate led by Speaker Pro Tempore Juan Flavier.

Ebdalin said the President would host a dinner at Malacañang for the two US senators on April 1.

Tiglao said the two senators would review whether the six-month exercise, which started last January, "has been successful."

Tiglao said Inouye and Stevens may "recommend an enhancement of Balikatan 02-1" to expand American involvement to such areas as civic works and infrastructure building.

A total of 660 American soldiers, including 160 elite Green Berets deployed in Basilan, are conducting cross-training with Filipino troops.

Tiglao had earlier said that some 300 additional American personnel might be deployed in Basilan although this "informal proposal" from the United States had yet to be officially discussed by the two sides.

Security adviser wants to bar 'snooping' foreigners from RP

From page A1

He said it was improper for foreigners to snoop into the country's internal affairs. "They can express their opinions but they cannot investigate the Philippine military," he said.

The mission is composed of parliamentarians, academicians, human rights activists and politicians. They had complained that they were not allowed access to civilians in Basilan, who were earlier reported to have been victims of human rights violations in the course of the military campaign against the Abu Sayyaf.

Golez said the government had learned that the core group behind the mission was the Transnational Institute (TNI), which he said had been known for its anti-American bias.

The TNI has been shadowing American military presence in various conflict areas, including Colombia, according to the national security adviser.

Golez noted that in Colombia the TNI sided with coca farmers in the anti-narcotics war being waged by the Colombian and US governments. "Anywhere the US goes, TNI will also go," he said.

Golez noted that the foreigners involved in the mission were private personalities without any official mandate.

"They were allowed to enter because Filipinos are extremely hospitable and respectful," Golez said. "But they don't have any right to undertake what they're doing."

He had earlier questioned the loyalty of Akbayan party-list Rep. Loretta Ann Rosales because she participated in the peace mission.

Yesterday it was Rosales' turn to hit back at Golez.

"Go less on security, and more on human rights," she said.

Rosales said she was in Basilan to lead a congressional inquiry into the alleged human rights violations committed by the 103rd Infantry Brigade in Basilan, and not as part of the peace mission.

She acknowledged though that she participated in the news conference of the peace mission prior to the group's trip to Basilan, and was even named one of its delegates.

But Rosales said she and Representatives Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III and Hussin Amin were there on March 24-25 to act on House Resolution No. 169 which called for a probe of alleged atrocities committed by the military following the warrantless arrest of many civilians in Basilan in July last year.

Rosales chairs the House committee on civil, political and human rights.

"It (Basilan trip) has nothing to do with Balikatan," she said in a phone interview. She assailed Golez for "muddling the issue" and for resorting to "name calling."

"It's unfortunate that he didn't bother to find out what the real score was," she added.

Defender of US policy

In a statement, the party-list representative lamented that Golez, a former congressman, seemed to have "lost his political bearings" ever since he became the national security adviser and "self-proclaimed No. 1 defender of American policy."

"Instead of intelligently and soberly addressing the problems of human rights violations allegedly committed by all sides in the thick of military operations, he does a Ponsio Pilato," she said in her statement.

"He washes the military's hands in connection with the possible gross violations of human rights reported by the Commission on Human Rights and several NGOs, which became the basis of the congressional inquiry," Rosales said.

She said Golez must have forgotten that the "broad policies on national security must always be imbued with the principle of human rights, universal principles enshrined in the United Nations covenants to which the Philippines is a signatory and which is provided for in the Philippine charter."

"Our unsolicited advice to Mr. Golez therefore is for him to go less on security and more on human rights," she said. "For the Holy Week, we hope he spends some time for serious reflection and self-flagellation."

Rosales also assailed Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar for not cooperating with the House committee on the inquiry, saying that the governor did not show up in the hearing.

But she said her committee was able to hear the testimonies of victims of the military and the Abu Sayyaf. But they were not allowed to talk to civilians who were arrested last year and are now detained in the Basilan jail.

One of those who testified, she revealed, was a woman who told the committee that her husband was allegedly abducted by the military on March 17.

EDWIN BACASMAS

CHECKPOINTS in the middle of nowhere in Isabela, Basilan.

Energy secretary wants to hire Maryann

From page A1

Among the possible positions awaiting Rosuman at the DOE are those for budget officer, project analyst and cashier.

Perez also assured Rosuman they would make arrangements so that she could review and take the board examination while she is employed at the DOE.

UNP officials have also sent feelers to Rosuman expressing their interest to hire her in their research department.

Some politicians have also volunteered to help her find a job.

Rosuman, who only stands 3 feet and 5 inches, said she was surprised and elated by Perez's offer.

"I am very thankful for that," she said.

Rosuman uses a cane to support her body in walking or standing. Her father Alfredo said he wanted to give her artificial legs as a graduation gift. "But no matter how hard we tried, we cannot raise the money to pay for them," he said in Filipino.

Alfredo works as a supervisor of an agricultural store here while his wife Feliciana tends a small variety store.

But Rosuman said she had a normal childhood despite her handicap because of the love, attention and care she received from her family.

Rosuman admitted that the attention she's getting puts more pressure on her to pass the board examination for certified public accountants in October.

"It added more pressure on me in our incoming board exam because of the great expectations from other people," Rosuman said. "But I am praying. I promise to give my best to pass the board exam."

Pay back

"My offer to Maryann is also my way of repaying the blessings that God has given me," Perez said.

He said he too came from humble beginnings and worked his way up.

Perez said his greatest struggle to get an education happened when he was pursuing his master's in business administration at the Wharton Business School in the United States through a scholarship grant.

"Because I was short of money for my needs, including payment for my boarding house, I asked 24 of my professors for any job. I was rejected by 23, luckily the last got me," he said.

RP envoy asks Erap doc to do knee surgery here

From page A1

ing act, Estrada said: "I don't believe he would get out of his way without instruction from anybody from the top."

"Why would he be concerned about my knees? That is not his job as an ambassador," he added.

Ironically, Estrada noted, Del Rosario himself underwent knee surgery in the Philippines years ago and ended up "spending one year in a wheelchair" due to some complications.

Interviewed by reporters at his Veterans Memorial Medical Center detention suite, Estrada handed out copies of Mow's March 15 reply letter to Del Rosario.

The letter indicated that Mow was "willing to explore the feasibility of doing the surgery for (Estrada) in the Philippines."

But that is "if my patient is to be denied access to the medical treatment of his choice" and if Estrada is "amenable" to such an arrangement, Mow wrote.

Mow stressed that Estrada's "need for knee surgery is quite clear, and it is his and our strong preference that the surgery be performed at Stanford (University) Hospital."

Security proposal

The letter also indicated that Del Rosario presented to Mow a "security proposal" dated March 11 for himself and his medical team.

Mow's other "requests" to Del Rosario centered on security. He said his personal security and that of his team will be "adequately addressed" if the US Embassy in Manila will also be advised to "provide (us) with its own security (personnel) to complement that detailed in the proposal."

Mow also said he "would like to reserve the privilege of bringing my own private security consultant" who is familiar with Philippine conditions.

However, Mow said he had one "important request that we did not get to discuss": that he and his team be given "diplomatic immunity" from the Philippine judicial system.

"The Ombudsman has clearly indicated his intention to subpoena me to testify before the Sandiganbayan should I be in the Philippines.

"Obviously this is unacceptable to me and cannot be allowed to occur if I am to come for the purpose of an evaluation of the patient and inspection of the available facilities," Mow wrote.

When asked to comment on Mow's statements, Estrada claimed the American doctor had actually phoned him days after he wrote the letter to explain that he was just trying to "accommodate" the ambassador.

"He told me he was just persuaded into writing the letter, considering that the ambassador traveled all the way from Washington just to see him," he said.

Estrada said Mow's position remains unchanged: That the medical equipment needed for the surgery is not available in the Philippines.

Purpose of downfall

During the interview, the deposed President said at least three Catholic priests will see him on Good Friday for a "retreat" at his detention suite.

They are Fathers Sonny Ramirez, Larry Faraon and Roger Alarcon, Estrada told reporters.

Asked whether his good friend, El Shaddai leader Mike Velarde, will be around, Estrada said he would like that but that Velarde is expected to be "busy" by then.

His Lenten reflection at this point in his life is on the purpose behind his downfall.

"Because it's only after Edsa Tres that the elite and Church hierarchy rediscovered that they have been neglecting the poor. *Kung hindi pa ako nakulong* (I had to go to jail)."

He noted that last Sunday, March 24, Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin issued a pastoral letter directing all parishes in Metro Manila to use the Mass collections to fund services and projects for the urban poor whose loyalty Estrada still claims to hold.

"Maybe God gave me that role . . . to make them rediscover that they have so neglected the Edsa 3 crowd," he said.

Now almost a year in detention, Estrada is forced to deviate from his traditional way of observing the hot Lenten season.

He said he used to hie off this time of the year to his property in Tanay, Rizal, near Camp Capinpin, where there's a "rest house and swimming pool." He was quick to point out that he bought the property in the '70s.

‘I work side by side with revolutionaries’

From page A1

impassioned letter, *“Ano bang kasalanan ginawa namin sa iyo?* (How did we fail you?)”

Others confronted me, “We support you, even in your long absences when we don’t know what you’re up to. Why do you have to leave?” It was clear to all that the question was not whether or not I should work side by side with revolutionaries. The question was: how could I do it and live the religious vows and community life the way we did?

I was carrying an institution without making it obvious. I carried as *baon* (food for the journey) the love of my sisters—that one was obvious. I had the blessing of my superiors for my juridical leave of absence. I had their consent but with great reservations, and an even greater respect, about the purpose. I did not have the mandate of a religious mission but plenty of prayer support for my “frontier mission.”

Nevertheless, they all looked upon it as a temporary stint.

First assignment

(My first assignment in the underground) was in a comprehensive “white area” under a guerilla front that spanned several provinces astride two geographically extensive regions. It was very risky because I often had to surface or go “above ground” with my unit fanning out in different directions where we were most vulnerable to the (Armed Forces of the Philippines units) and their local intelligence assets. Just as often, I had to go meet with Communist Party and (New People’s Army) cadres of the region in their mobile bases. Many times we would outwit the government military when leading regional cadres needed to feel the pulse of the rank and file in the urban centers.

In a next wave of reorganization, as a result of overall progress, my committee went up and down highways and byways of two regions, our operations weaving through several guerilla fronts. After that, I was transferred to a different territorial base. The work just kept growing more complex, (the) scale of responsibility more and more extensive. It gave me the capacity to see the total picture of the region.

I was entrusted with a leadership function I never dreamt I’d have. I mention all these to let you know that there is much leeway for the likes of me in the selection of leaders. It did not matter that I was a woman religious. I was given the responsibility because of what I was capable of. I was not there to represent the Christians for National Liberation. I was there as me. (Laughs) My sisters sensed I had some key position. I never confirmed nor denied it.

But, no, I don’t even know how to fire the simplest gun. It’s not for me to take up arms or even to get indirectly involved in military maneuvers. It’s the party cadres who direct military strategy hands on. At an ambush they’re side by side with the Red Fighters.

Communality of goods

I lived my vows, though the vow of religious obedience to a superior and my community was suspended for the time being. I was truly poor, survival diet and all. In the populated guerilla zones we ate whatever the peasants or fisherfolk brought us. In the forests we had to bring along provisions bought by couriers from the market to augment meager forest crops. In times of a food blockade by AFP troops we, survived on *“gabi”* leaves and root crops or rationed rice for days. Even then the morale was high. No complaints.

As in the convent, we practiced communality of goods. If there were gifts from friends, affluent family, support groups, then we had good food. We enjoy these while they last but there is no craving for them. Whenever the sisters sent me chocolates, each piece was halved or quartered, depending on how many people were in the immediate cluster of huts. Distribution is made to each one, (Communist) Party and NPA (New People’s Army) officials, Red Fighters and technical staff, the security detail, the peasants, (and) especially the children.

Any gift—money, clothes, footwear, soap, books—all these were sentralisado, that is, kept in the custody of the treasurer. You ask for whatever you need. You also ask permission when you want to buy anything. It might already be available, or there are other priorities at the time. The comrades operating in the urban centers practiced the same. These usually save up whatever they can to bring *pasalubong* (gifts) to those in the guerilla bases.

You never leave without permission due to security reasons. Anywhere you are, whatever your position of responsibility, you need permission for any departure from what has been agreed upon by the collective. There are so many parallels in conventual practice.

Lifetime vow of celibacy

As regards my vow of celibacy, I never gave it up for a single moment. I have a lifetime vow. (Laughs) There was this hunk of a comrade who said once, “I can’t believe you never fall in love. Can’t you even get a crush on anyone?” I said, Why not, but I just don’t allow myself to. This was in my younger years, of course. In a certain region where I was first deployed, I was told there were a number of comrades just waiting for me to leave the convent for good and they’d line up for a *mungkahing manligaw* (romantic overture). They were all some 10 years younger than I! Though at the time I looked their age.

(Did I feel I was still a nun of my order?) It’s part and parcel of my self-concept. Yes, I was happy, there was such strong bonding. As in the convent, the people you live and work with are a surrogate family. You’re involved in one another’s joys and griefs.

Even before I joined them in the guerilla zones, the comrades there held my congregation in their esteem. That’s true of some others, too. They got to know some of our sisters without ever having met them, just from the anecdotes I’d tell. They enjoyed my stories about the retired sisters, would crowd around pictures I’d take along after a seasonal visit to my convent.

In those short home visits to the convent and my own family, I’d get pampered with comforts and all kinds of useful gifts; they knew I’d bring those to the comrades. They’d pile food on me “to make up” for privations. They updated me on everything going on in the congregation. I let my major superior keep track of my general whereabouts.

(Life in the guerilla zones was) kinda nomadic. Tasks and security reasons keep us constantly on the move. We keep ourselves dispersed in our respective areas of operation and gather only for meetings. Plenary meetings are always held in the most secure places. If it’s in a forest, an advance party goes ahead to build makeshift but comfortable huts, ensure the firewood and water supply, wall up the bathing area. I’m good at weaving coconut leaves for walling. Ah, those natural pools, those cool, sparkling mountain springs channeled into bamboo tubes to run down your body.

Guns are always carried around even when going to the toilet or to the creek to bathe. We all take turns with kitchen work and other house chores, the men and women alike. In the morning, there’s an exercise regimen. After breakfast, everybody troops to the conference hut, the largest, with makeshift tables and benches arranged in tiers like an amphitheater. There’s a head table for the presider or the instructor with a blackboard behind him. It can even be a whiteboard, if the host front committee can afford it. In the “office” hut, the secretarial staff would work incessantly on typewriters and computers. Jokes spice up all discussions. In the evenings we like to sit around and swap stories or sing.

But always there’s a guardedness, a sensitiveness to sound, even if the security detail are all at their posts and lofts. There’s so much to tell you about, so many interesting happenings, unforgettable experiences, the celebrations, weddings and memorial services. There are the incidents of outstanding heroism, the fearsome military encounters, the victories and tragedies.

Who gets Inquirer first

But this one I must tell you. Whenever I come in to the base I’m usually loaded with *pasalubong*. After the appreciative glances, the *uys* and *ahs*, they grab the newspapers. Never forget to bring newspapers or else you’ll hear no end of it throughout your stay. And here’s the curious thing. Whoever is the top cadre in the gathering, he or she gets the Inquirer first. It’s not a rule. It’s a mark of deference. Meanwhile, the rest glance at the Inquirer every now and then to grab it when it’s put down. From as far back as the comrades can remember, the Inquirer is the No. 1 paper in the guerilla zones. Even if they get brickbats from it now and then. The order of reading is: first the front-page stories, then the editorial, then the columnists, then the features.

There was this senior cadre of the national top brass, one of the most esteemed. He used to head a region. How he loved *balut!* I used to bring him *balut*, but he chewed on the Inquirer first.

(Tomorrow: The purge)

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Auto Review on Sunday

IN observance of the Holy Week, Auto Review will not be aired on its regular Saturday slot this week. It will be aired on Easter Sunday, 3:30 to 4 p.m., on NBN 4. The show hosted by Ron de los Reyes will feature the sidelights of its recent trip to the Sepang International Circuit in Malaysia. Isuzu Mandaue will be the subject of its Cruising Around with Isuzu segment while the Caltex Delo 4x4 Extreme Challenge and the Sepang Formula One race will be on its Motorsports Report.

SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ◉ Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Manguiat

BASKETBALL: NBA - Dallas Mavericks vs Milwaukee Bucks at 9 a.m. (r – 4:30 p.m. and 9 p.m.) on ESPN

US NCAA - 2002 Postseason NIT Tournament, Semifinal #1 at 12:30 p.m. (r – midnight) on ESPN

GOLF: PGA - The Players Championship, Third Round at 2 p.m. (r) on Star Sports

TENNIS: Nasdaq 100 Open, Early Round Coverage Day #3 at 9 p.m. on Star Sports

MEMPHIS FIGHT FINALIZED

Lewis, Tyson to get $17.5M each in June

LAS VEGAS —Lennox Lewis and Mike Tyson will meet June 8 in Memphis for the heavyweight championship, under a deal wrapped up Monday night after weeks of on-again off-again negotiations.

Tyson and Lewis each are reportedly guaranteed $17.5 million to fight for the IBF and WBC titles Lewis holds, and could earn millions more if the fight grabs the attention of the public.

Tyson adviser Shelly Finkel confirmed that an agreement had been reached and that both fighters were signed and committed to the match. Showtime cable network spokeswoman Marina Capurro also confirmed the fight was on.

Ticket price: $2,500

The bout is expected to be held at the Pyramid arena, which will seat about 20,000. Ringside tickets will be priced as high as $2,500.

Promoters also stand to make a bundle, with projections that the fight could gross $100 million from the site fee and pay-per-view sales.

The major stumbling block—a $12.5 million site fee—reportedly had been resolved by giving local promoters in Memphis more time to get a letter of credit. Some details were still pending, but none that would derail the fight, Finkel said.

"We now have close to 11 weeks before fight and I believe everything is fine," he said.

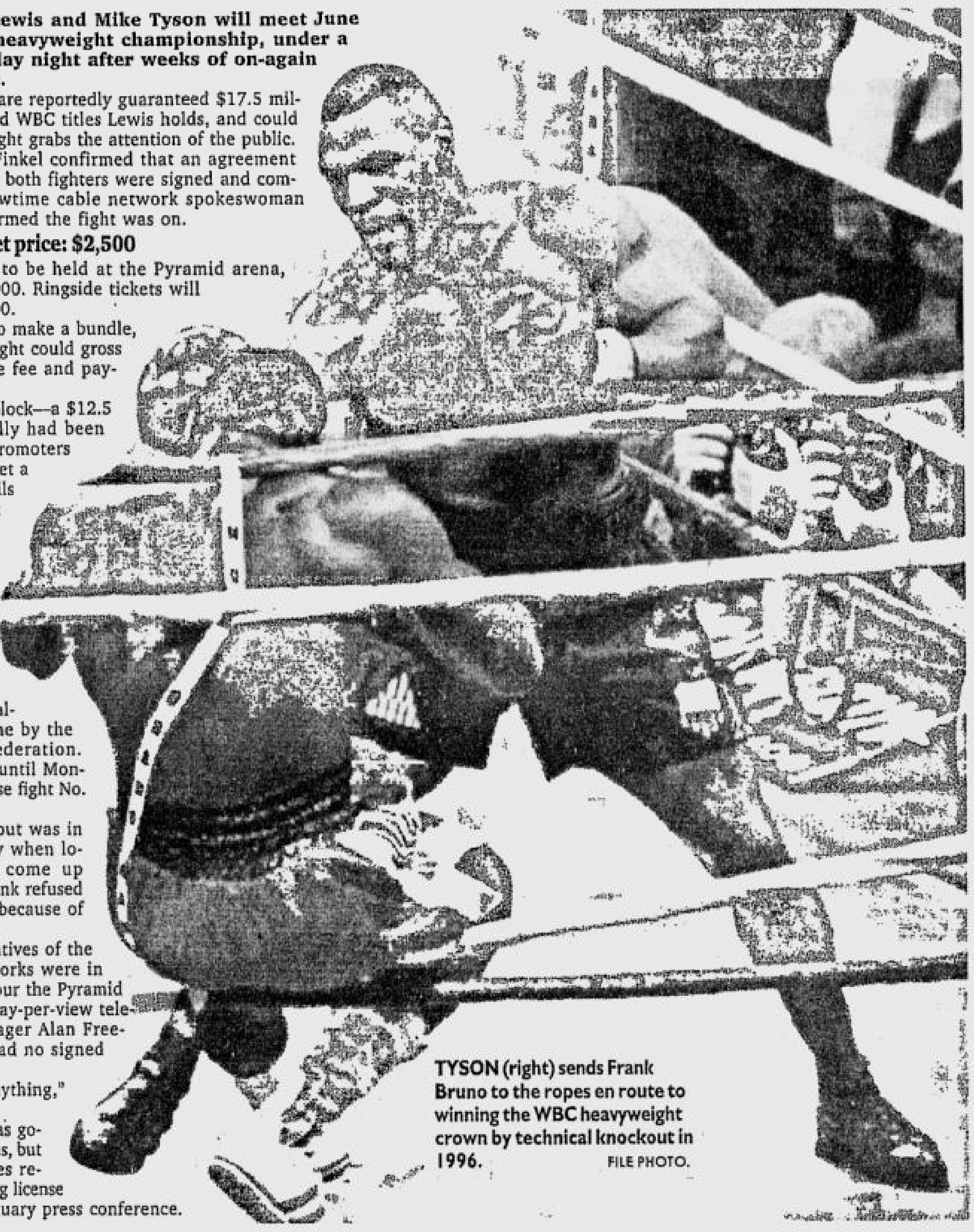
Promoters were set to formally announce the agreement, which was finalized just before a deadline by the International Boxing Federation. The IBF had given Lewis until Monday to make the fight or else fight No. 1 contender Chris Byrd.

The much-shopped bout was in jeopardy as late as Friday when local promoters couldn't come up with the site fee after a bank refused to issue a letter of credit because of "moral issues."

Production representatives of the HBO and Showtime networks were in Memphis on Monday to tour the Pyramid arena in advance of the pay-per-view telecast. Arena general manager Alan Freeman, however, said he had no signed contract to host the fight.

"Nobody's told me anything," Freeman said.

The fight originally was going to be April 6 in Las Vegas, but Nevada boxing authorities refused to give Tyson a boxing license after an outburst at a January press conference.



TYSON (right) sends Frank Bruno to the ropes en route to winning the WBC heavyweight crown by technical knockout in 1996. FILE PHOTO.

Safin beats Peruvian; Chilean trips Sampras

GONZALEZ

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida—Russia's Marat Safin broke a racket in anger, drew a point penalty for another outburst, twice blew a third-set lead and still managed to beat Peruvian qualifier Luis Horna 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (3) Monday at the Nasdaq-100 Open.

"I played bad," the No. 6-seed said. "Just wasn't my day. But I was there. I fight. I'm not satisfied with my game, but I'm satisfied with my win, the way I fought."

The ragged two-hour, 17-minute victory advanced Safin to the fourth round, where he will face Chilean qualifier Fernando Gonzalez.

Gonzalez beat three-time winner Pete Sampras of the United States 7-6 (1), 6-1 later Monday, making it 24 tournaments in a row without a title for Sampras since he won a record seventh Wimbledon championship in July 2000.

The No. 11-seeded Sampras fell to 10-5 this year.

Top-seeded Lleyton Hewitt rallied to defeat Jan-Michael Gambill for the third time this year, 3-6, 6-4, 7-5.

In women's play, the Williams sisters moved within one round of a semifinal showdown, which would be their first meeting since Venus beat Serena in last year's U.S. Open final.

No. 2-seeded Venus hit 26 winners to two for Amanda Coetzer and won 6-2, 6-0 in 44 minutes. No. 8 Serena swept Marissa Irvin 6-1, 6-4.

No. 3 Martina Hingis of Switzerland reached the quarterfinals by beating American Alexandra Stevenson 6-2, 6-0. Hingis has lost four games in three matches.

Also, No. 4 Kim Clijsters of Belgium swept Cara Black of Zimbabwe 6-4, 6-2 and No. 12 Elena Dementieva of Russia erased six match points in a third-set tiebreaker to beat Anne Kremer of Luxembourg 1-6, 7-5, 7-6 (14).

Mitsubishi netfest Tuesday

WORLD-CLASS tennis action invades Manila anew next week when the 13th staging of the Mitsubishi Lancer International Juniors Tennis Championships unfolds at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Twenty nations, including host Philippines, will be represented in this Group II championships which have seen the participation of world No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt and Mark Philippoussis of Australia, American Andy Roddick, Indian Leander Paez and host of other ATP and WTA campaigners.

Forty-four world-ranked netters, led by girls' singles defending champion and world No. 15 Hsieh Su-wei of Taiwan and world No. 139 Czarina Mae Arevalo of the Philippines, have been awarded slots in the 32-man main draw of both the boys' and girls' singles.

The tournament, presented by adidas and supported by Midtown Hotel, Wilson balls, Viva Mineral Water, Philippine Sports Commission and ITF starts on Sunday with the two-day qualifying. Main draw competitions start on Tuesday.

Other top 100 players in the girls' singles main draw are No. 21 Silvana Bajer of the Netherlands, No. 27 ZsuZsanna Babos of Hungary, No. 32 Elise Tamaela of the Netherlands, No. 38 Sania Mirza of India, No. 48 Isha Lakhani, also of India, No. 73 Beier Ko of Canada, No. 76 Chan Chi-wei of Taiwan, No. Pichaya Laosirichon of Thailand, No. 86 Darya Ivanov of Australia, and No. 89 Alexandra McGoodwin of the USA.

Spurs post 13th straight victory

LOS ANGELES—Tim Duncan had 33 points and 13 rebounds, and David Robinson added 19 points as San Antonio beat the Los Angeles Clippers, 91-85, in the NBA Monday night to extend their winning streak to 13 games and clinch a playoff berth.

The result also lifted Dallas into the playoffs in the West.

San Antonio had to rally from a 13-point third-quarter deficit to keep the NBA's longest victory string of the season alive.

Michael Olowokandi had 26 points and 17 rebounds for the Clippers, who remained 2 1/2 games behind Utah for the West's final playoff berth. Elton Brand had 15 points and 10 rebounds, his 50th double-double of the season and four short of the franchise record.

Celtics edge Heat, 87-82

Erick Strickland scored a season-high 23 points, including a pair of 3-pointers late in the fourth quarter Monday, to lead the Boston Celtics to a 87-82 victory over the Miami Heat.

Alonzo Mourning scored 20 points to go along with 10 rebounds, and Eddie Jones had 19 points for Miami. OTHER RESULTS: Denver 84, New York 83; Phoenix 102, Cleveland 96; Seattle 106, Utah 92; Memphis 103, Portland 100. *AP*

Form RP team immediately—Puyat

FORMER two-time Fiba president Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat II yesterday urged the Philippine Basketball Association to form the national team immediately "if we hope to do better than in past Asian Games."

Puyat recalled that in 1973, it took one year for the nationals to play together before they won the ABC (Asian Basketball Confederation) crown in Manila.

Puyat, who was then the BAP president, named the late Tito Eduque as head coach and sportsman Dante Silverio as team manager. Eduque and Silverio then formed the 15-man national team, including three alternates.

"Opposition in the Busan Asian Games (this September) will be very tough," noted Puyat. "If our goal is to win back the Asiad gold, coach Jong Uichico and his assistants have to form the team right away rather than make them play as two teams in the ongoing (PBA) tournament."

Puyat stressed that time is running out, with only less than six months left for the national team to play together.

According to the long-time cage czar, China is not the only team we have to worry about in the Busan Asiad. "Lebanon will be tough to beat. And so are Korea, Japan and other Middle East countries."

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1995, Benedict Tiong rolled 2465 pins to snatch the 2nd Metba Mobiline Invitational graded masters title at SM Megamall. Also today in 1996, Allan Ballester clocked 36 minutes and 2 seconds to top the Nike-Pharmaton 10K Classic at the Burnham Park in Baguio.

FROM SHARK TO VOLUNTEER

Olongapo guard Topex Robinson (with ball), a recruit from Shark, goes for a drive against Cagayan de Oro's Ruel Bravo during their Metropolitan Basketball Association exhibition game on Saturday at the Olongapo Convention Center. The Volunteers won, 84-74.

When bleak becomes black

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

BLEAK it was for America in 2001.

New York's Twin Towers, America's symbol of prosperity, were blown up by terrorists in the most savage attack yet on mankind since Hitler's grisly gas chambers. The September 11 mayhem left no less than 5,000 people dead. It scarred a nation not used to devastation inflicted by man. It seared a leadership used to destroying perceived enemies overseas.

But black it also was for America in 2001.

The Oscars, the world's benchmark for cinematic excellence, went black when Denzel Washington and Halle Berry swept acting awards—a first in the academy's 74-year history.

Washington won for "Training Day" and Berry for "Monster's Ball."

A third black—or colored, or African-American, if you wish—won for lifetime achievement: Sidney Poitier. Poitier was the first black to win the Oscar's best actor award for "Lilies of the Field" 38 years ago in 1964, when Washington was 9 years old and Berry yet to be born.

Said Washington, 47: "When I was in college, my classmates called me nut when I said I would one day win the Oscar...I'll keep on chasing you, Sidney."

Said Berry, 33: "With this, the door has been opened...This is for you Dorothy Dandridge."

Dandridge was the ill-fated singer-actress Belle had portrayed in the biographical film a while back. Dandridge was the first black actress to be nominated for the top Oscar plum.

Notice the radical shift in theme here?

Not to worry, fellas. Have I not told you a thousand times that sports imitates life, that life itself is sports?

OK, now, listen up. Here's your sports stuff.

Will Smith was the third black with a starring role nomination in this year's Oscars for his portrayal of Muhammad Ali in "Ali."

Now who doesn't know Ali?

If you don't, go to my podner Recah Trinidad and he'll gladly give you the "whuppin'" that you rightfully deserve. His search for a flagellant should end with you.

With Smith's nomination, the blacks scored another first: It marked the first time that two black actors have fought for the top Oscar award in a single year.

As a sports man, I should have strongly rooted for Smith.

I did not.

Except for the fine choreography when he was fighting in the film, Smith in "Ali" was all sound (talk?) and no sense (fury?). The film itself was not that nice. It focused more on Ali's religious vendetta than his struggle for racial freedom, identity. His ring virtuosity has not been thoroughly probed. The essential Ali was not in the film: Glib talking, scientific atop the roped arena, witty and intelligent off the ring.

Since the film used the Foreman fight for its ending, "Ali" missed out on the most moving aspect of Ali's life, if not boxing career: The Thrilla in Manila with Frazier on Oct. 1, 1975.

Maybe I'm just being biased? Me being a sportswriter?

Wrong.

Think of "Ali's" potential if The Thrilla in Manila had been made as the movie's chief highlight? With Marcos and Imelda given cameo roles?

Maybe with those in the film, Will would have given Washington a close battle for the Oscar.

And consider: How about Russell Crowe losing to Washington despite a powerful performance in "A Beautiful Mind"? Crowe got junked for his much-publicized temper against a TV producer in the run-up to the Oscars?

Ah, but that's another story to be explored later.

Wait till I see "Training Day."

Black could turn bleak, who knows.

■

Public Service: I hope you have a trouble-free travel this week but in case you encounter one, call any of the following: 0918 949 9224, 0919 614 7383, 0919 614 7384. They are your Red Cross Hotlines for Holy Week along the North and South Expressways.

Page System: Ernie Delgado, the great guitarist, wherever you are, please call me at 8974834. If I'm not around, leave a number where I can get in touch with you, please?

Baguio tennis March 31

BAGUIO Tennis Club in Burnham Park will host the third leg of the 2002 Milo Junior Tennis Cup and Regional Workshop on March 31-April 2.

Featured events are the boys' and girls' singles 18-under, 16-under, 14-under, 12-under and the unisex 10-under divisions, while doubles will be played in the 18-under, 14-under and unisex 10-under categories.

The Milo netfest organized by the Children's Tennis Workshop and supported by adidas and Sports Kids is sanctioned by the Philippine Tennis Association (Philta).

According to tournament referee Rene Selmar, the deadline for registration is 8 a.m. on Easter Sunday at the BTC clubhouse. The draw and the tournament will follow immediately.

RP hosts Asian Formula 3

HOT on the heels of the recently concluded Petronas Malaysian Grand Prix in Sepang comes another major motorsport event that is just as exciting and competitive—the 2002 Asian Formula Challenge.

Organized by the Manila-based Asian Formula Three Corp. (AF3), the 2002 Asian Formula Challenge is Asia's first truly international championship for Formula 3 and Formula Renault cars.

It will feature seven legs, with the Philippines, China and Malaysia hosting two legs apiece and one round scheduled in Korea.

The first leg will be held in the Philippines on April 6-7 at the Batangas Circuit.

The succeeding legs will be held on May 4-5 and June 15-16 at the Zhuhai International Circuit in China, July 27-28 at the Samsung Everland Circuit in Korea, Aug. 24-25 at the Sepang f1 Circuit in Malaysia, Sept. 28-29 at Johor in Malaysia, and the final leg will be held on Oct. 26 & 27 at the Subic International Raceway in the Philippines.

Said AF3 deputy managing director Rikki Dy-Liacco: "We also expect to have an additional leg in Beijing and are looking forward to having Indonesia and Taiwan on our list of venues."

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Calabarzon cycling race in the offing

A FOUR-DAY cycling race covering the Calabarzon (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon) area and ending at the Luneta will be held this summer.

To be bankrolled by Airfreight 2100-FedEx Philippines, the race would herald the Tour's revival next year.

The Philippine Amateur Cycling Association welcomed the impending return of the Tour and at the same time lauded efforts to inject life into amateur cycling, particularly for the country's participation in international competitions.

"It's a welcome development for Philippine cycling as a whole and we are glad we have some good Samaritans who consider cycling as a sport needing attention and support," said Paca president Ponciano Regalado Jr.

Airfreight 2100-FedEx Philippines is also keen on supporting the Tour and has virtually sealed talks with organizers, who tapped the Professional Cycling Association of the Philippines as race managers.

Aside from providing a summer spectacle, the Tour is intended to generate funds for the national cycling team.

Swim listing ends April 1

REGISTRATION for the 2nd Ceelin Swimming Festival slated at the St. Benedict College in Ayala Alabang will end on April 1, according to Ral Rosario, head coach of the organizing Swordfish Swimming Club.

"We have actually extended the deadline by a day in consideration of the fact that a lot of people will be out of town because of the Holy Week," said Rosario, a former Asian Games gold medalist.

The event, scheduled April 6-7, is expected to attract more than 500 swimmers.

Registration is going on at the Acle Square, 9532 Acle St., San Antonio Village with tel. 8991897. Organizers are also accepting fax entries at 8991933.

Basketball book takes look at RP

By Lorenzo Manguiat

THE RISE in the worldwide popularity of basketball during the past few decades has undoubtedly been tremendous. Just ask Alexander Wolff, seasoned *Sports Illustrated* writer, who witnessed this extraordinary phenomenon first hand and recounted his adventures (and misadventures) in his latest book *"Big Game, Small World."*

In *"Big Game, Small World,"* which was released in January, Wolff embarked on journey to 16 different countries and 10 different states in the United States in the quest to discover the elements which captivated the imagination of millions of hoop fans across the globe.

Not surprisingly, one of the countries Wolff decided to cross over to was the Philippines. In fact, Wolff devoted a rather intriguing chapter on the Philippines entitled *"The Philippines: Madness and Mimicry."*

"And then, in Manila, I encountered a people not satisfied with merely adapting the American model, but determined to replicate its every detail. Everyone in the Philippines——players, coaches, executives, sportswriters, fans—pointed proudly to the exactness of the facsimile," *shared Wolff.*

SPORTSWATCH

Rivas cops chess title

TWELVE-YEAR-OLD Aaron Khrisna Rivas downed Bruce Alfred Reyes in the ninth and final round Monday to rule the junior division in the finale valuation tournament of the Milo Checkmate special clinic held at Greenhills Shopping Center. A grade six student of F. Ma. Guerrero Elem. School, Rivas finished with seven points on seven wins and two losses to claim the junior title. Jaroz Felipe of Diliman Preparatory School took the runner-up honor with 6.5 points while Reyes of OB Montessori-Sta. Ana slid to third place with 5.5 points.

Apacible, Manikan win

MP Turbo's George Apacible, beginner teammate Jam Manikan and Intelco's JP Cariño captured the top positions in the Auto Madness/Speedfest 2002 Kart Race on Sunday in Robinsons Starmills, San Fernando, Pampanga. Apacible, two-time national karting champion, led from start to finish, taking first place in the MP Turbo Open race. Champion race driver Carlos Anton managed to finish second even though he lost his brakes in the closing laps. Cariño took first place in the KT Rated division and third in the Open class.

Olympian Lim dies

OLYMPIAN Eddie Lim passed away yesterday at 8 p.m. in his residence at Wack-Wack after a lingering sickness. His last will was to be enshrined in the National Basketball Hall of Fame. His remains lie at the La Salle Greenhills until Thursday, March 28 and will be transferred to the Abbey of San Beda College, his alma mater, Mendiola, Manila. Requiem masses will be said every noon and 7 p.m. Burial will be on Sunday, at the Loyola Memorial, Marikina City after the 2 p.m. Mass at the San Beda Abbey. He left his wife, Luisa Ongtengco, children, Eddie, Enrique (deceased), Emmanuel, Ernesto, Eloisa Campos and Elvira Liboro, brothers and sisters Lulu Lee, Carmen Lim, Charrie and Flory Anglin, Eddie, Jr., Tony (deceased) Renee and Eric.

Tony Lang comes back

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

BEST Import awardee Tony Lang is back to replace an ailing Julius Nwosu, bolstering the bid of Batang Red Bull in the ongoing Philippine Basketball Association Governors' Cup.

"I am glad that Tony (Lang) will don our colors anew," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao, who steered the Thunder to a stirring 4-2 victory over highly rated San Miguel Beer in last year's Commissioner's Cup title series. "In that conference, Tony played a very remarkable role by providing the mature judgment to the young team at the crucial moments en route to the championship." Lang was eventually named Best Import of the conference, considered as one of the most exciting successful ever in the 27-year history of the PBA.

Lang, a 6-foot-7 forward who played for Duke University on two US NCAA Finals and five NBA teams, had been endorsed by Red Bull diehards after winning the Commissioner's Cup to rejoin the team in its Governors' Cup stint, a clamor which team management also wholeheartedly wanted, but the move did not push through because Lang had other previous commitments immediately following his PBA days.

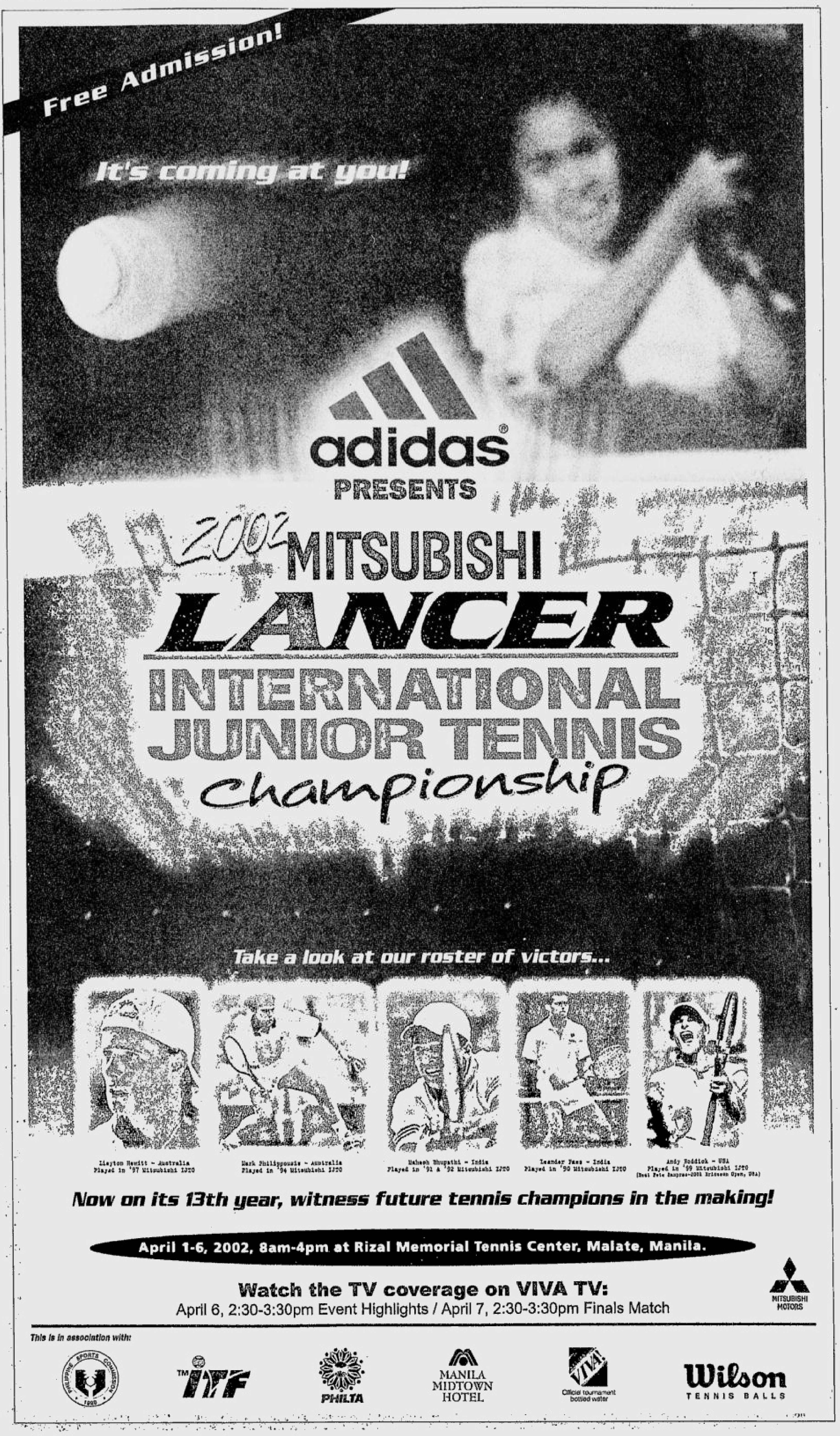
Just three weeks ago, the 28-year-old Lang ended his contract in Japan where he played in the country's only professional basketball league. "No wonder, he remains in good shape," said Guiao after seeing his *balik*-import during a practice game. Lang returns to action on Thursday, April 4, at the Makati Coliseum when Red Bull plays Coca-Cola in a lone attraction at 6 p.m.

"Lang is blending well with his old Red Bull buddies and jelling just as well with Joe Bunn, the other Thunder import," said Guiao. "The team will also have no problem with the combined maximum height limit of 13 feet for the two imports since Lang is 6-foot-7 while Bunn is barely 6-foot-4.

With an intact lineup led by Junthy Valenzuela, Jimwell Torion, Lordy Tugade, Jay Mendoza and Willie Miller, plus new faces Vince Hizon, Noli Locsin and Nelson Asaytono, not to mention their hardworking imports Tony Lang and Joe Bunn, Red Bull is certainly a team to reckon with in this Governors' Cup.

"This team will always play its best," said franchise owner George Chua. "Our modest success is a reflection of a lot of prayers, hard work and dedication."

As a student, Lang played for Duke in the 1990s. In 1994, he sparked the Blue Devils to the NCAA Finals although Duke lost to Arkansas in the championship game. His college roomate then was Grant Hill, who rose to become an NBA star. After graduation, (Lang graduated from Duke with a double major in Economics and History), he played in the NBA for six years, first for the Phoenix Suns who chose him as their second round draft pick in 1994, then later for Cleveland, Miami, Toronto and Philadelphia.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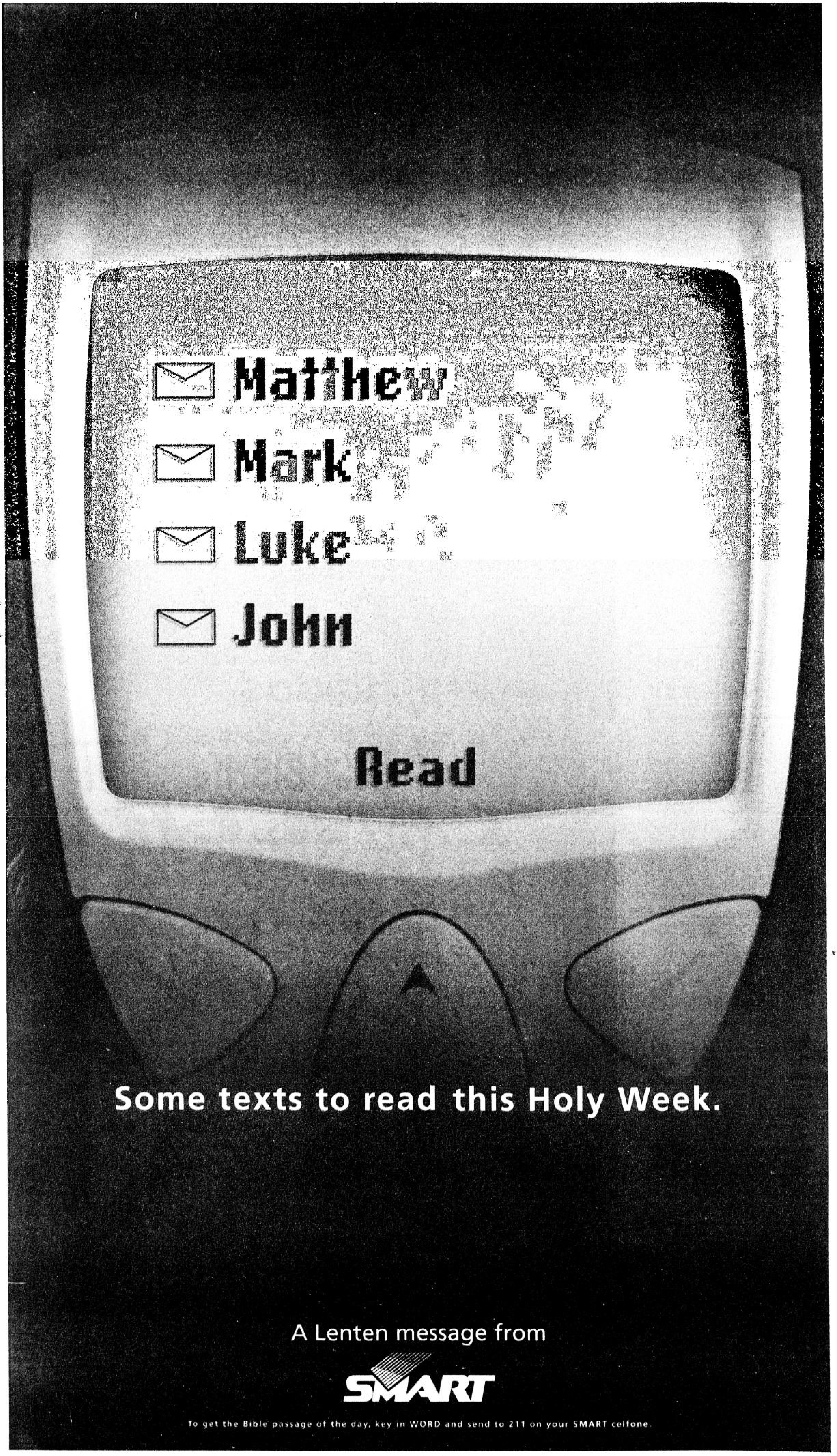
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6 Makati cops face dismissal /A22
3 cities without water for 20 hours /A20

METRO

Editor Louie C. Camino

NBI: Bomb parts were imported

By Philip C. Tubeza

PARTS of the bombs found around Metro Manila were not locally manufactured.

National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) Director Reynaldo Wycoco yesterday said that the rifle grenades and other ammo found along with the bombs came from abroad.

"Our initial check shows that these do not belong to the inventory of the Armed Forces of the Philippines. We've checked the lot numbers and they do not belong to our arsenal," said Wycoco.

The NBI earlier checked the lot numbers of the ammo, like the rifle grenade and 40 mm cartridge, found with the bomb in Malate on Thurday.

"We're now checking when and where they were smuggled into the country. We are still in the verification stage. You know that we have such a long coastline," Wycoco added.

He said that groups like the Abu Sayyaf have a record of buying high-powered firearms and ammunition from abroad.

"I'm not saying that it's the Abu Sayyaf. What I'm saying is that from experience, they were able to buy from outside," Wycoco said.

An intelligence officer earlier tagged a Muslim secessionist group as the culprit behind the recent bomb scares. He even said that the bomb scare was a dry run for an actual bombing blitz similar to the Rizal Day blasts in December 2000.

But Wycoco said that they have not encountered such a report, adding that law enforcement agencies are still trying to confirm who are the real people planting the "incomplete" bombs around the country.

He explained that the NBI is coordinating with the Philippine National Police and the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines to check on the background of the so-called Indigenous People's Federalist Army (Ipfa).

"We have not encountered this name before. We're checking if they are just using (Ipfa as) a pseudo name," Wycoco said.

"Somebody claiming to be the group spokesperson even had himself interviewed on radio. But we should be careful. We don't know if he was just trying to bask in the limelight," Wycoco added.

He said the government has a "good lead" but declined to elaborate, adding that they are still trying to size up the so-called Ipfa group.

"If they're real, we want to know their base of operations, their numbers, or if they have another agenda besides their call for a federal style of government," Wycoco said.

BASILAN no longer has a monopoly of guns and fearful civilians. Amid the recent bomb scare, Metro Manila easily grabbed its share of firepower and fright as shown in this scene yesterday at the Pantranco bus station in Pasay City. (See related picture on page A20)
ERIK ARAZAS

Bullet that killed wife came from NBI agent's gun

CASE closed.

Western Police District Director Nicolas Pasinos Jr. made this declaration yesterday on the bloody firefight between the police and a National Bureau of Investigation confidential agent in Paco, Manila.

The gun battle left dead a policeman and the NBI confidential agent. The agent's wife was also found dead in his car.

But Pasinos said that the bullet that killed Ailyn Iguban, 39, married, a custom's broker of Phase 5, Block 10, Lot 34, Australia St., Southville Subdivision, Biñan, Laguna came from the 40 mm gun of her husband, Cosain Bacamaran, 39, of 1508-C G. Tuazon Street, Sampaloc, Manila. However, Bacamaran's 40 mm pistol has been missing since the firefight.

"She was already dead when my men tried to flag him down. The woman also told a friend that if something bad happened to her, her husband should be blamed," Pasinos said.

Phillip Tubeza

'A simple case of saving money'

THE DIRECTOR of the Bureau of Corrections yesterday denied allegations that he pressured another prison official into awarding a P1.6-million contract for the delivery of chickens at the New Bilibid Prisons.

Retired Col. Ricardo Macala said the bureau would have lost P238,572.82 if he did not ask lawyer Kabungsuan Makilala to award the contract to F.A. Agricultural Trading, the lowest bidder at P57 for every kilo of chicken. "It was just a case of awarding the contract to the lowest bidder in order to save money for the bureau," he said in a statement. "Makilala wanted to award the contract to the second lowest bidder even if he did not have the authority to do so."

Avoid Edsa the rest of the year

By Christian V. Esguerra

IF YOU intend to go to Roxas Boulevard via Edsa, better stay away from the avenue for the rest of the year.

The Pasay City Traffic and Parking Bureau yesterday warned motorists against heavy traffic with the closure of three southbound lanes of Edsa from the BLTB bus terminal to Tramo, right after the Holy Week.

Only two lanes will be left for an average of 10,000 vehicles using the southbound lane of Edsa every day, according to bureau chief Florencio Mateo.

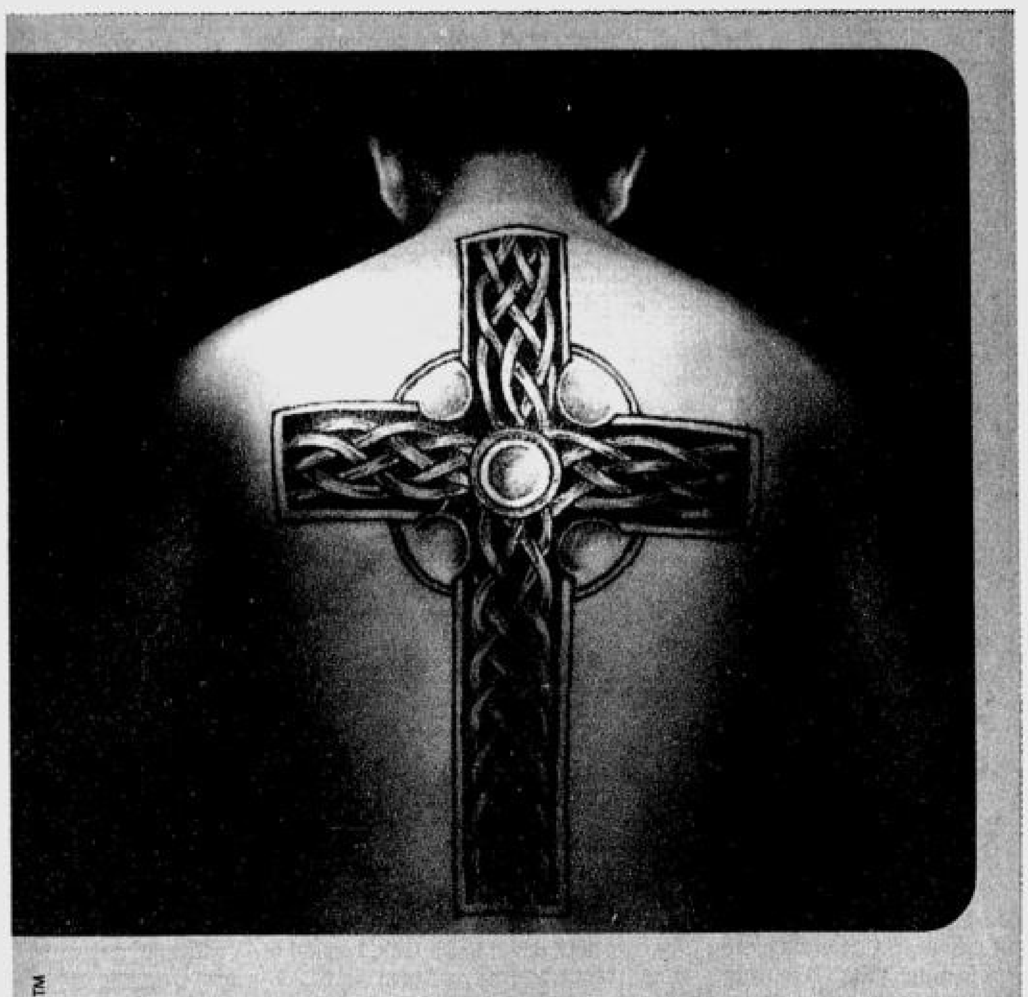
Mateo said the closure is part of the ongoing construction of the Tramo fly-over that will serve as access road to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

The new airport facility is set to operate by December.

Beginning Monday, private vehicles will have to turn right to Evangelista Street and use Protacio Street, which connects Pasay to Makati, to avoid the build-up of vehicles on Edsa, according to the traffic chief.

Mateo said his office would also close temporarily the bus terminals of Ramirez, St. Jude, and RJ on Edsa to pave the way for the completion of the Tramo fly-over.

Buses will not be able to enter and exit the terminals with only two lanes open on Edsa, he said.



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5	Give Thanks	Integrity's Hossana Music	TONE GIVETHANKS
6	God Is The Strength Of My Heart	Integrity's Hossana Music	TONE GODSTRENGTH
7	God Will Make A Way	Integrity's Hossana Music	TONE GODWILLMAKE
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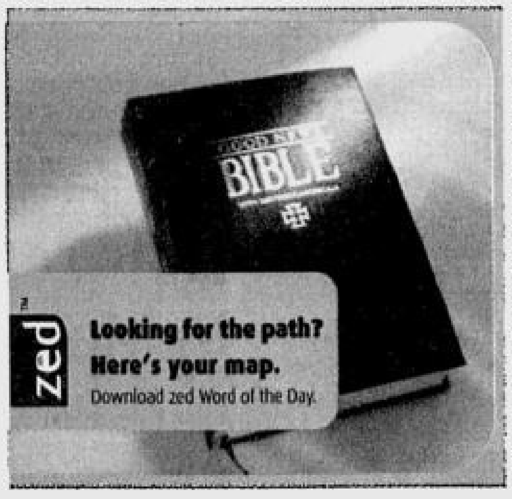

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CALTEX What Drives You

A primitive's Holy Week prayer

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

After all, what's the Holy Week break for if you can't frolic in the sun?

TODAY is Holy Wednesday, I'm still free to take a shower or jump into the river any time of day.

But on Good Friday, I will try to beat everybody to the bathroom. On this special day of mourning, as in my boyhood, washing our bodies after noontime will again be totally taboo.

No excuses, mother would decree from the somber, soundless kitchen. All of us kids, there were five boys in the family, must all take a bath early.

We were also not allowed to venture near the river.

There was no reason given, and we never dared ask why.

But years later, I think it was in a borrowed kitchen in California to where my mother had strayed for good like an uneasy migratory bird, she chirped something about this old taboo.

She said she had been grimly reminded by her doting grandmother that the once-pristine river, where old people in our place went to wash their bodies, would be both deathly and sinful immediately after noontime on Good Friday.

* * *

Deathly and sinful. She spoke about this Good Friday ordinance with firmness and finality.

Anyway, Nanay would explain that male penitents who had roamed the burning streets where their badly cut bodies were continuously flogged and bloodied, never failed to descend into the river immediately after noontime.

Not only to be refreshed and revived.

It was believed that, in finally cleansing their punished bodies, these men would also cleanse themselves of their old sins.

So, if you yourself took a swim after these men had entered the river, you would most likely inherit all their badness.

There was indeed a very safe distance between the river and our bathroom. But, just the same, the fearful warning carried in that taboo about taking a late Good Friday shower has continued to hold us in awe through all the succeeding seasons of Lent.

* * *

I would myself later witness during a Lenten break by the sea off San Narciso, Zambales what Nanay had told us about the sins of this earth suddenly abounding in the tide.

It was Good Friday and, after an early shower, I walked to the beach off Wakas, or Baybay as residents called that edge of the great China Sea.

I had all but forgotten that kitchen ordinance when, shortly after noontime, I saw dusky, brawny, bare-chested men sliding into the sea. They had just stripped their faces of the white cloth that had hidden their identities during the impossible hours when they were being flogged savagely under the sun.

One by one, they also flung the multi-tipped whip that had been used to wound and scourge their bodies far away among the waves.

They crossed themselves, closed their eyes in deep prayer, then solemnly took what my mother had called a cleansing dip.

May all their sins be forgiven!

* * *

Mouthing mother's decree from the silent kitchen would sound very silly today.

Good Friday, often the hottest day of the year, has after all become an occasion for an all-day swim.

The suggestion about taking things slowly, the call for a pause and prayer in order to achieve some serenity, would most likely fall on the deaf ears of the day's revelers.

After all, what's the Holy Week break for if you can't frolic in the sun?

And it would be doubly hard to suggest to the majority that looking deep inside oneself, making a review of things, could go a long way in steadying the man spiritually.

Sorry, but all the many years in the fast lane have obviously eroded and erased what we should've been treasuring: our debt to our ancestors.

Things will never be the same again. But primitive as it may now seem, I continue to cling to that old ordinance, and a few other quaint rituals that, for sure, still teem with sound instructions.

The philosopher and archeologist Sir James Frazer put it very aptly for the modern man when he wrote: "We stand upon the foundation reared by the generations that have gone before, and we can dimly realize the painful and prolonged efforts which it has cost humanity to struggle up to the point which we have reached."

They may indeed appear completely progressive out there, but are they necessarily wiser than the nameless souls who have toiled to bring them where they are?

Kindly pray that the wisdom and greatness of our ancestors, not the greed and vindictiveness lurking in the Black Friday tide, have washed into the intestines of those blindly involved in the rat race.

3 cities without water for 20 hours

THERE WILL be no water in Valenzuela City and a large portion of Caloocan City and Quezon City, including the Obando and Meycauayan water districts, for 20 hours starting at 9 p.m. today up to 5 p.m. tomorrow, according to Maynilad Water.

The service interruption will give way to the combined activities of Water Production and Water Network divisions to improve water service in these areas, the Maynilad said.

Engineer Edgardo Esteban, Water Production head, said they plan to shut down Basin I and Basin II of the La Mesa Treatment Plant 2 to repair the flash mixers, which are used to mix water and chemicals. The activity will last for six hours, Esteban said.

Preventive maintenance of the La Mesa booster electrical facilities, and the replacement of valve actuators on Buenamar Street corner Gen. Luis Street in Novaliches and MNDR corner Paso de Blas Street in Valenzuela, will also be done.

The affected areas in Quezon City are: Filinvest I and II, Batasan Hills, Payatas Area, Ciudad Regina, Don Antonio Heights, Capitol Estate I, Barangays Talipapa, Sauyo, Bagbag, San Bartolome, Gulod, Sta. Lucia, Sta. Monica, San Agustin, Nagkaisang Nayon, Capri, Pasong Putik and Lagro, Novaliches Proper, Fairview Area (North, East, West, BIR) and Fairmont Subdivision.

In Caloocan City, Almar Subdivision, Metrocor/Estrella, Villa Amor 2, Maria Luisa Subd., Cielito Homes, Marryhomes 1 and 2, Franville 4 and 5, Urduja Subdivision, Villa Susana, Alama Jose, Caritas Subdivision, Villa Angelita, Quintos Subdivision, Constellation Homes, Doña Helen, North Matrix Ville, Del Rey Ville 2, Miranda Subdivision, Dolmar Golden Hills, PLC Subdivision, Silanganan Subdivision, B.F. Homes 1 and 2, Sto. Tomas Subdivision 4, Sta. Fe Subdivision, Caloocan Industrial Subdivision, Castillo Compound, Pleasant View, Ciudad Grande, Llano Road, T. Samson Road, F. Jacinto, Anahaw Street, Gen. Luis Kaybiga, Gen. Luis Bagbaguin, Manggahan B. Llano, and Villa Campo will experience the water cutoff.

The whole of Valenzuela City and the Obando and Meycauayan Water Districts in Bulacan will also have no water.

Malabon will also experience low pressure or water cutoff during the same period.

Customers of Manila Water in the subdivisions along Sampaguita Avenue, Barangay Holy Spirit in Quezon City will also be waterless.

Affected customers are advised to store water good for the duration of the water service interruption. For water rationing schedule, affected residents can call the Maynilad Hotline 1626 or Manila Water Hotline 1627.

April 6 deadline in QC

By Agnes E. Donato

QUEZON CITY taxpayers have until April 6 to pay their real estate taxes, according to city treasurer Victor Endriga.

Endriga also announced that the Taxpayers Lounge in City Hall would be open for business during the Holy Week except on Good Friday.

He said that employees of the city treasury office would be around to accept tax payments from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. even on Holy Thursday, Black Saturday and Easter Sunday.

Those who have yet to pay their first installment of real property taxes do not have to beat the previous March 31 deadline, Endriga said. They also have until April 6 to pay their tax obligations without interest being charged, he said.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, March 27, 2002
Wednesday of Holy Week

1st Reading: Is 50:4-9
Gospel: Mt 26:14-25

One of the Twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, went off to the chief priests and said, "How much will you give me if I hand him over to you?" They promised to give him thirty pieces of silver, and from then on he kept looking for the best way to hand him over to them.

On the first day of the Festival of the Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus and said to him, "Where do you want us to prepare the Passover meal for you?" Jesus answered, "Go into the city, to the house of a certain man, and tell him: 'The Master says: My hour is near, and I will celebrate the Passover with my disciples in your house."

The disciples did as Jesus had ordered and prepared the Passover meal.

When it was evening, Jesus sat at table with the Twelve. While they were eating, Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you: one of you will betray me." They were deeply distressed and asked him in turn, "You do not mean me, do you, Lord?"

He answered, "He who will betray me is one of those who dips his bread in the dish with me. The Son of Man is going as the Scriptures say he will. But alas for that one who betrays the Son of Man; better for him not to have been born." Judas, who was betraying him, also asked, "You do not mean me, Master, do you?" Jesus replied, "You have said it."

Commentary

Thirty pieces of silver. Much less than the value of the perfume Mary poured over His feet. How swiftly the gospel carries us from Mary's love and loyalty to Judas' terrible betrayal! It's made clear that Jesus was not caught by surprise. He saw what was coming and he did not turn aside. Thus, he teaches by example as well as by word: "Whoever tries to save his life will lose himself, but whoever gives his life will be born again." (Lk.17:33) Jesus is celebrating the passover: the Lamb is sacrificed and the people begin their exodus from slavery to freedom, through the waters of death to a new life as God's people. The same journey we'll celebrate and commit ourselves to again on Easter night, by renewal of our baptism.

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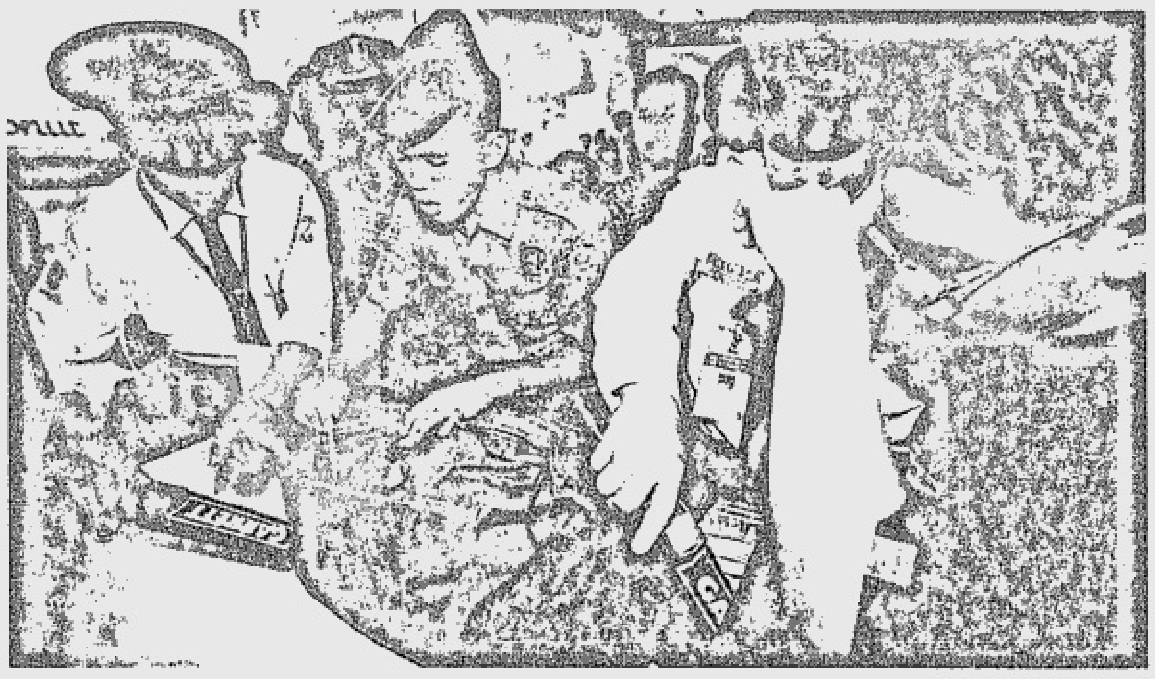
SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (EVIDENCE)—When circumstantial evidence sufficient for conviction—To warrant a conviction, direct evidence is not always necessary. The rules of evidence allow the courts to rely on circumstantial evidence to support its conclusion of guilt. Circumstantial evidence is that evidence which proves a fact or series of facts from which the facts in issue may be established by inference. It is founded on experience and observed facts and coincidences establishing a connection between the known and proven facts and the facts sought to be proved. Section 4, Rule 133 of the Revised Rules of Court, however, provides that circumstantial evidence is sufficient for conviction only if the following requisites are complied with: (1) there is more than one circumstance; (2) the facts from which the inferences are derived are proven; and (3) the combination of all the circumstances is such as to produce a conviction beyond reasonable doubt. With respect to the third requisite, it is essential that the circumstantial evidence presented must constitute an unbroken chain which leads to one fair and reasonable conclusion pointing to the accused, to the exclusion of others, as the guilty person. The circumstances relied upon by the trial court in convicting accused-appellant do not satisfy the foregoing requirements. They do not indubitably point to accused-appellant as the author of the killing of the victim. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Puno, First Division, People v. Ayola, G.R. No. 138923, September 4, 2001].

DIGEST BY R.B. VERA



THOROUGH JOB
Police and security personnel at the Philtranco bus station in Pasay City are doing their jobs in conducting thorough searches of bags of travelers, who have to endure yet another nuisance on their way to their destinations.
ERIK ARAZAS

Murder charge upheld vs suspect in Cinco slay

By Jerome Aning

A MANILA city prosecutor has upheld the murder charges filed against the suspected gunman in the killing of Commission on Elections official Velma Cinco last November.

In a resolution dated March 8, City Assistant Prosecutor Danilo Formoso said he found no reason to alter the earlier findings of another prosecutor, Marina Manuel.

Manuel's ruling that Conrado Robles should be charged with murder and frustrated murder was the basis of the case filed before the city regional trial court Branch 53.

The arraignment of Robles last February was postponed after the accused moved for a reinvestigation.

Three armed men shot dead Cinco at the corner of Pedro Gil and Eden Streets in Sta. Ana, Manila on Nov. 20 last year. Cinco was on her way to work in her car with her son Carlo Hubert and her sister Marian Saborre. Carlo was wounded in the ambush, but Saborre was unhurt.

Members of the National Bureau of Investigation arrested Robles, a former Comelec employee, in San Pascual, Batangas eight days after the killing. Formoso junked Robles' defense that there were inconsistencies in the testimonies of Saborre and Cinco's neighbor Eduardo Acosta, who gave the police a description of the gunman.

Robles claimed he has been in Batangas since Nov. 20 attending a prayer service in memory of his mother's death anniversary. He claimed he has 25 witnesses who could back him.

He also said he was just a fall guy used by the authorities to implicate Cinco's archrival and predecessor in the Comelec Angelina Matibag through Matibag's brother, a retired military colonel.

But Formoso gave credence to the fact that three witnesses gave an accurate description of the suspect and even identified him in a police lineup.

Holy retreat in Manaoag

A HOLY retreat for the youth called "Young Man and Woman—Where are you Going?" will be held today at Our Lady's Pilgrims' Center in Manaoag, Pangasinan.

The retreat starts at 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Celebrities like singer-actress Aiza Seguerra and television and movie actress Beth Tamayo are among the personalities who will share their faith and spiritual reflection with the retreat participants.

On Black Saturday, March 30, there will be a family holy retreat at the same venue from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Celebrity couple Christopher de Leon and Sandy Andolong and their family, and mother-and-daughter tandem—Snooky Serna-Go and Mila Ocampo—will share their thoughts and reflections about family life and faith.

The theme for the Family Retreat is "Ang Pamilya… sa Paanan ng Krus."

Bullet-riddled body washed ashore

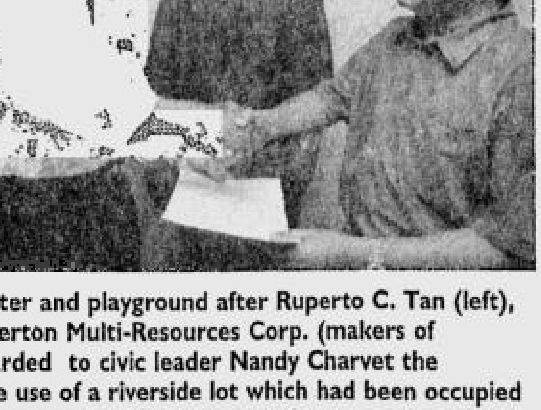
By Philip C. Tubeza

THE BODY of a man with three gunshot wounds was washed to the shore of Manila Bay yesterday in Tondo, Manila.

Police identified the victim as Mike A. Bangkolet, 33, of Poblacion 2 in Parang, Maguindanao, through an identification card found on him, said investigator SPO3 Ernesto B. Jose Jr. of the Western Police District-homicide section.

The body, which was in advance state of decomposition, had a gunshot wound in the chest, back and stomach, police said.

Police said bystanders found the body about 7:30 a.m. yesterday along the seashore in Block 7, Bagong Lupa, Baseco Compound in Tondo, Manila. The victim was clad in a white T-shirt, denim pants, brown leather belt and leather shoes, police said.



BIG BREAK
Other than enjoy the view of the flowing river again, residents of Barangay Vergara in Mandaluyong City will also get their own park, ampitheater and playground after Ruperto C. Tan (left), President of Eterton Multi-Resources Corp. (makers of Flexboard) awarded to civic leader Nandy Charvet the contract for the use of a riverside lot which had been occupied and blocked by a trucking firm for nearly 20 years. Standing as witness is Karl Spencer Tan. Construction of the multi-purpose park, to be managed by Samahang Alige, starts April 1.

Special permits for buses

By Abigail L. Ho

EXPECTING an influx of commuters during the Holy Week, the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) issued special permits to buses plying several provincial routes.

As of Monday, the agency had already given out over 150 special permits to buses going to Cabanatuan and Pangasinan in the north and to Bicol and Lucena in the south, according to LTFRB chair Dante Lantin.

These special permits would allow buses to go beyond the routes specified in their franchises.

But Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez said in a statement that there would be strict enforcement of rules against colorum vehicles even during the holidays.

He stressed that the purpose of special permits is to augment land transportation supply, especially going to the provinces.

"But we will be lenient because we would like commuters to get safe and convenient transportation to bring them to their provincial destinations," he said.

Alvarez urged transportation groups to file applications for special permits with the LTFRB as soon as possible to avoid delays in the processing of the papers.

He recalled that there was a shortage of provincial buses during the Christmas season because a lot of these buses failed to get special permits to go beyond their specified routes.

Many passengers were either stranded in the bus stations or were not able to secure tickets to their destinations.

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Victims of Joey-Alma breakup?

By Christian V. Esguerra

MORENO

AROUND 40 transport operators, supposedly affiliated with actress Alma Moreno, yesterday accused Parañaque Mayor Joey Marquez of harassing them following the collapse in January of his 12-year marriage with the former actress.

They claimed that armed men allegedly affiliated with Marquez have been illegally towing their vehicles for using the busy Sucat area as makeshift terminal.

Prior to the breakup, the United Overseas Contract Workers Transport Cooperative claimed Marquez had never driven them out of their terminal near Mc Donald's restaurant on Sucat Road.

That was because Moreno served as the group's "backer and protector," according to a ranking officer of the cooperative who refused to be named.

He clarified that Moreno had never asked anything in return.

The officer said the organization provided vehicles and warm bodies during Marquez's campaign sorties in the last two elections.

The cooperative has been using the terminal for around 40 vans plying the Parañaque-Makati route for a minimum fare of P35 since 1995, according to board member Domy Giamoy.

Mar Jimenez, the city's public information officer, said the breakup had nothing to do with the local government's campaign to rid the city of illegal terminals.

"They (operators) should give Madam (Alma) peace," he told the INQUIRER. "They should leave her alone."

The ranking cooperative official said Marquez ordered the crackdown on illegal terminals even as the mayor's men have supposedly been demanding grease money from the operators.

"If indeed we are extorting money from them, how come we're driving them away?" Jimenez asked. "They are just making all these allegations since the city government is getting in the way of their illegal activity."

Jimenez appealed for sobriety among the operators, saying the city government was only implementing a metro-wide drive against illegal terminals.

The Metro Manila Development Authority, in coordination with other key government agencies, is currently clearing the Baclaran area of illegal terminals and vendors to provide better access to the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3.

The new airport facility will begin operation by December.

Tight guard in Quiapo, other city churches

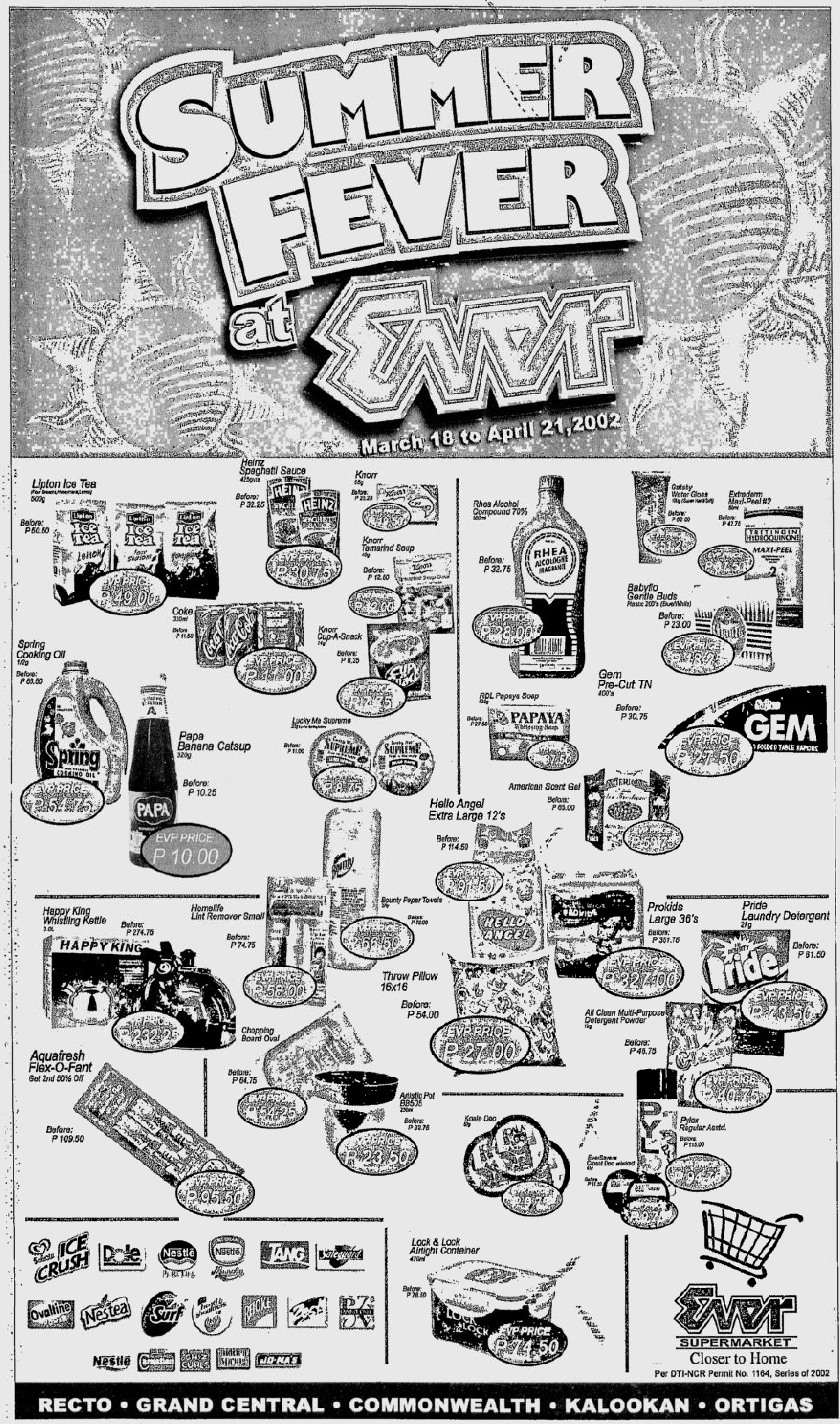
BLACK NAZARENE

THERE will be additional security in Manila's various churches, especially this Holy Week, following the bomb scare around the capital.

The Western Police Department yesterday specified it's going to put a tight watch over the Quiapo Black Nazarene procession on Good Friday which attracts thousands of devotees.

"We have not recovered a live bomb. But we are concerned that the next time a bomb is planted, it will be the real thing," WPD Director Chief Supt. Nicolas Pasinos said.

He added that all leaves in the WPD have been cancelled after the entire metro police was put under red alert.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6 Makati cops face dismissal

By Alcuin Papa

THE NATIONAL Police Commission (Napolcom) filed yesterday summary dismissal proceedings against six Makati City narcotics cops for the illegal arrest and detention of a Makati resident on March 19.

But the chief of the Makati City narcotics unit said the arrest of Renato Tandoc, 45, of 2897 Interior H. Santos St., Makati City, was a legitimate buy-bust operation.

Antonio Salazar, director of the Napolcom's Investigation, Monitoring, and Inspection Services (Imis), issued an order yesterday instigating summary dismissal proceedings against the six based on a complaint filed by Tandoc before the agency.

The six were identified as SPO2 Wilmer Antonio, SPO1 Marvin Fijilan, PO2 Virgilio Costa, PO2 Angelo Aguas, PO2 Leo Cabrang, and PO2 Rodrigo Igno.

Based on Tandoc's complaint, he was taking a bath on the evening of March 19 when he heard the police barge into his home.

Putting on a towel and still dripping wet, Tandoc stepped out of the bathroom to check.

The team, composed of the six policemen in question, said they were looking for an unidentified woman wearing denim jeans. Tandoc and his son argued that there was no such person inside the house.

But Tandoc said the police were insistent and went up to the second floor of the house to search.

When police came up empty-handed, they turned on Tandoc instead. "*Ito na lang tarantadong ito ang hulihin natin* (Let's arrest this bastard instead)," the police allegedly said.

Tandoc protested and said he was not guilty of any crime. When he refused to be taken in for questioning, police allegedly dragged Tandoc out of his house while still draped with a towel.

While being dragged outside, Tandoc's towel came off and he fell to the ground where he was allegedly kicked by some of the policemen.

Tandoc's son tried to give his naked father clothes but the police allegedly pointed their guns at the youngster.

Police later brought Tandoc to the police station and accused him of trafficking illegal drugs. They allegedly detained him for three days.

Director Salazar said the six arbitrarily arrested and detained Tandoc. They arrested Tandoc without a warrant.

"Basic rules of engagement say that police should secure a warrant before entering a dwelling or arresting an individual," Salazar's order read.

It also said Tandoc was detained without inquest proceedings started against him before the Makati City Prosecutor's Office.

However, Insp. Gary Reyes, chief of the Makati City Drug Enforcement Unit, told the INQUIRER that Tandoc is a notorious drug pusher in the area.

Sharing scheme mess rocks dzRH

By Alcuin Papa

THE MANAGEMENT and owners of radio network dzRH will reportedly dismiss hundreds of employees of their radio stations nationwide following the implementation of a new sharing scheme.

A radio executive of one of the radio stations in Mindanao, who requested anonymity, has told the INQUIRER that "chaos" is marring the implementation of the new sharing scheme between management and station managers.

Under the scheme, billed as "Hating Kapatid," profits of a particular radio station would be divided evenly among the owners of the network and the station managers. Expenses of the station are to be deducted from the share of the station managers.

The scheme was announced at the beginning of the year and full implementation is slated for May.

In essence, the new program will do away with the positions of area managers. The area managers are responsible for operations of all dzRH radio stations in their area and whose responsibilities include looking for financing and funding for the radio stations' operations, programming and reporting to the national office.

The first three months of the year is a grace period where the area managers would be eased out of their positions by April.

But according to the station executive, the area managers are arbitrarily dismissing station managers and staff members in favor of their "own people."

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	JOHN Q
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	HARI NG SELDA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	BLADE 2
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	TIME MACHINE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	ICE AGE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7(DOLBY)	BANDITS
FARMERS PLAZA-1(DOLBY)	HARI NG SELDA
FARMERS PLAZA-2(DOLBY)	BLADE 2
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	JOHN Q
ODEON-2	BANDITS
ROBEN	SNAKE CHARMER
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	BIBINGKA
REMAR	SNAKE CHARMER
REMAR-2	BIBINGKA
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	BIBINGKA
B	EVA LASON KAY ADAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE MAJESTIC
CINEMA-2	BANDITS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ACHILLES
CINEMA-3	BIBINGKA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	D-TOX
CINEMA-6	MASARAP HABANG MAINIT
CINEMA-7	EVA
CINEMA-8	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MAJESTIC
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BANDITS
CINEMA-11(SDDS)	JOHN Q
CINEMA-12	JIMMY NEUTRON
CINEMA-14	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CINEMA-15	GOT 2 BELIEVE
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	BANDITS
CINEMA-2	JIMMY NEUTRON
CINEMA-3	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-4	THE MAJESTIC
CINEMA-5	GOOD ADVICE
CINEMA-6	JOHN Q
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

RELAX & SEE A MOVIE

The mystery. The suspense. The adventure.
The call... that started it all.
E.T.

Get a chance to see the Advance Screening of
" E.T. The Extra Terrestrial "
@ Robinsons Movieworld Novaliches - Cinema 2 on March 31, 2002 - (Sun) -3pm. Just purchase two(2) movie tickets from March 23 - 30, 2002.

In theaters on APRIL 3, 2002

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD NOVALICHES

"E.T. The Extra Terrestrial Advance Screening Promo"

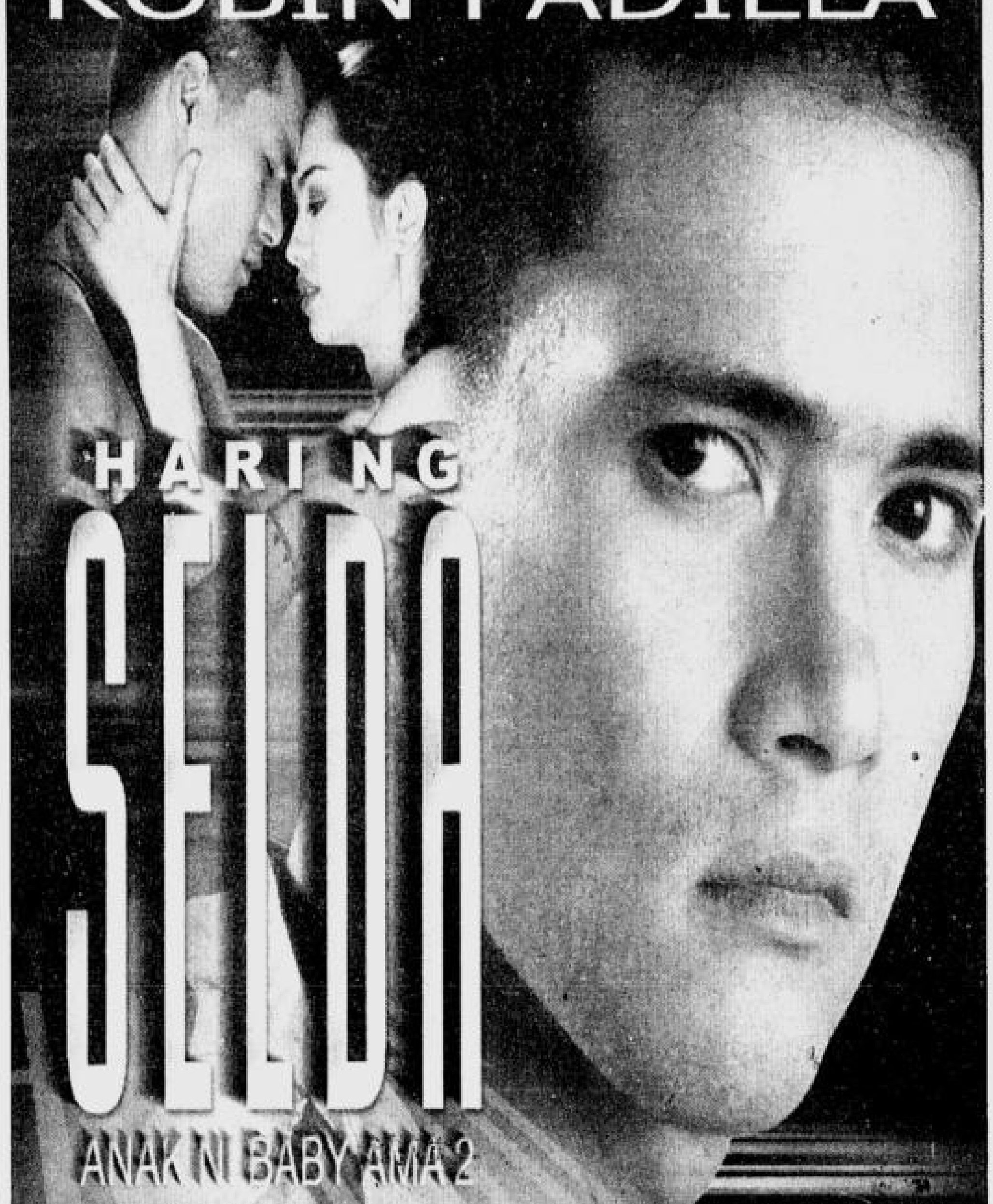
PROMO MECHANICS:

1. Every customer who purchase two (2) movie tickets @ Robinsons Movieworld NOVALICHES, from March 23-30, 2002 is entitled to Pick-A-Prize from the fish bowl.
2. Simply present the two(2) movie tickets @ the redemption booth to get a chance to pick a FREE invite @ the Advance Screening of "E.T. The Extra Terrestrial" on March 31., 2002 (Sunday) - 3:00 pm @ Robinsons,Movieworld Novaliches - Cinema 2
3. To claim the ticket, just present the stub at the Customer Service of Movieworld Novaliches on March 31, 2002 from 1PM onwards (screening time is @ 3pm).
4. All employees of Robinsons Movieworld, manpower, security agency and their relatives up to the 2nd degree of affinity or consanguinity are disqualified from joining the promo.

Per DTI Permit # A3-224, Series of 2002.

3-TAON NABILIBID
NGAYON, MAY KWENTONG IHAHATID!

ANGELIKA DELA CRUZ
ROBIN PADILLA



ANAK NI BABY AMA 2

Raven Villanueva Rommel Padilla and Johnny Delgado

DIRECTED BY DEO J. FAJARDO, JR.

VIVA FILMS
A VIVA ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY

'PRE PERSONALAN NA 'TO!
OPENS MARCH 30 NATIONWIDE

$48,000,000 THE HIGHEST WEEKEND OPENING IN THE US THIS YEAR

MTRCB RATING ➤ G GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED

LICENSED TO CHILL ON MARCH 30

ICE AGE
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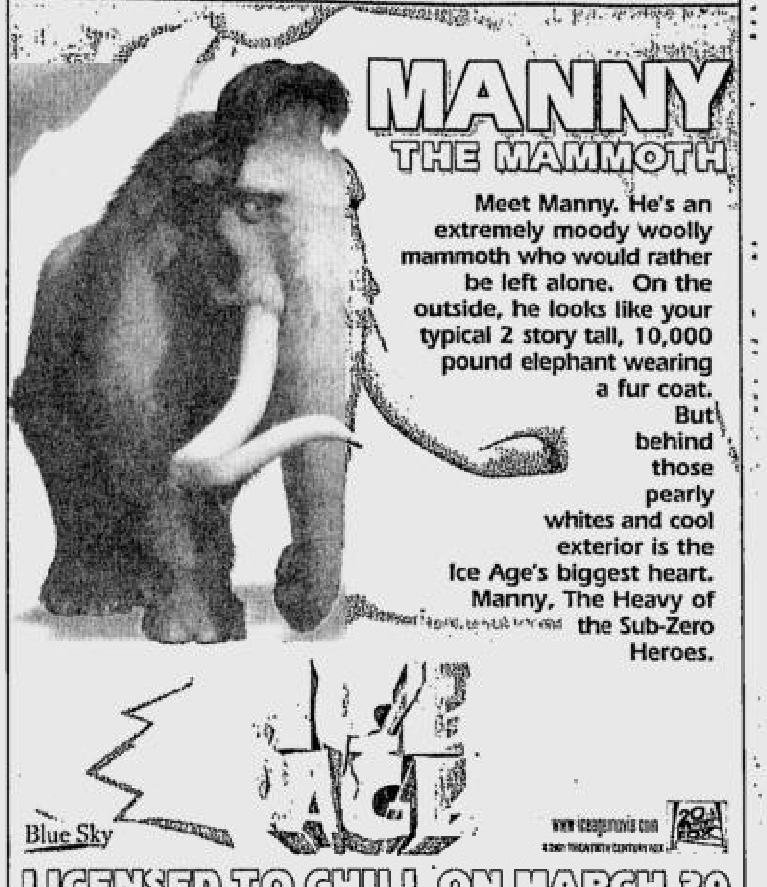
Special thanks to: DUNKIN' DONUTS Pasalubong ng Bayan · SMART Simply Amazing! · Information Gateway · JOEY 92.3 Rhythms · RT · MAGIC 89.9 · WRock · KC

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED

MANNY
THE MAMMOTH

Meet Manny. He's an extremely moody woolly mammoth who would rather be left alone. On the outside, he looks like your typical 2 story tall, 10,000 pound elephant wearing a fur coat. But behind those pearly whites and cool exterior is the Ice Age's biggest heart. Manny, The Heavy of the Sub-Zero Heroes.

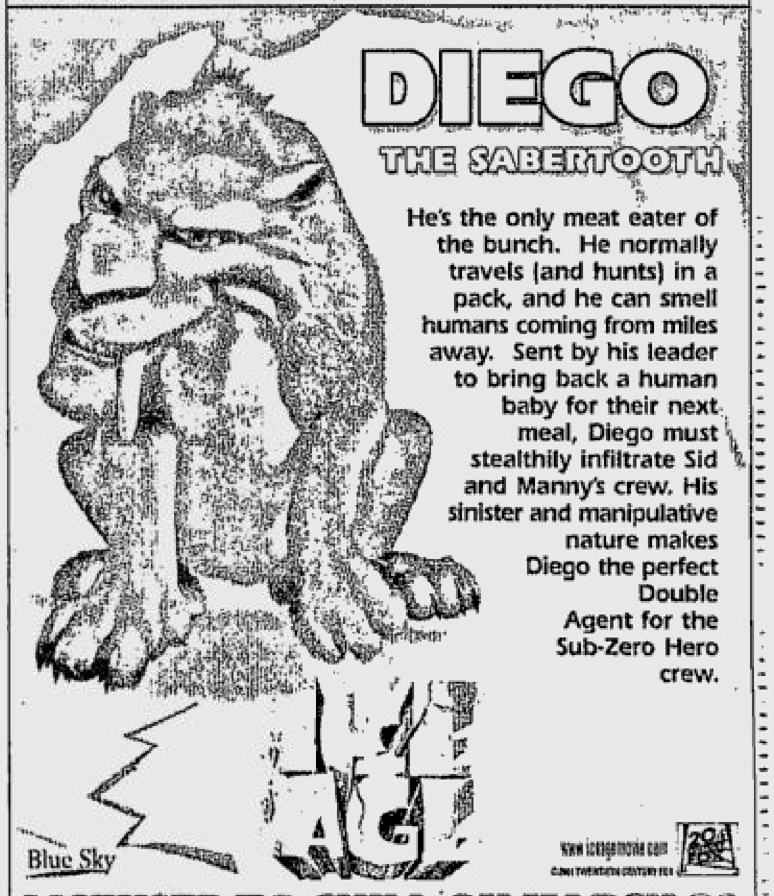


LICENSED TO CHILL ON MARCH 30

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED

DIEGO
THE SABERTOOTH

He's the only meat eater of the bunch. He normally travels (and hunts) in a pack, and he can smell humans coming from miles away. Sent by his leader to bring back a human baby for their next meal, Diego must stealthily infiltrate Sid and Manny's crew. His sinister and manipulative nature makes Diego the perfect Double Agent for the Sub-Zero Hero crew.

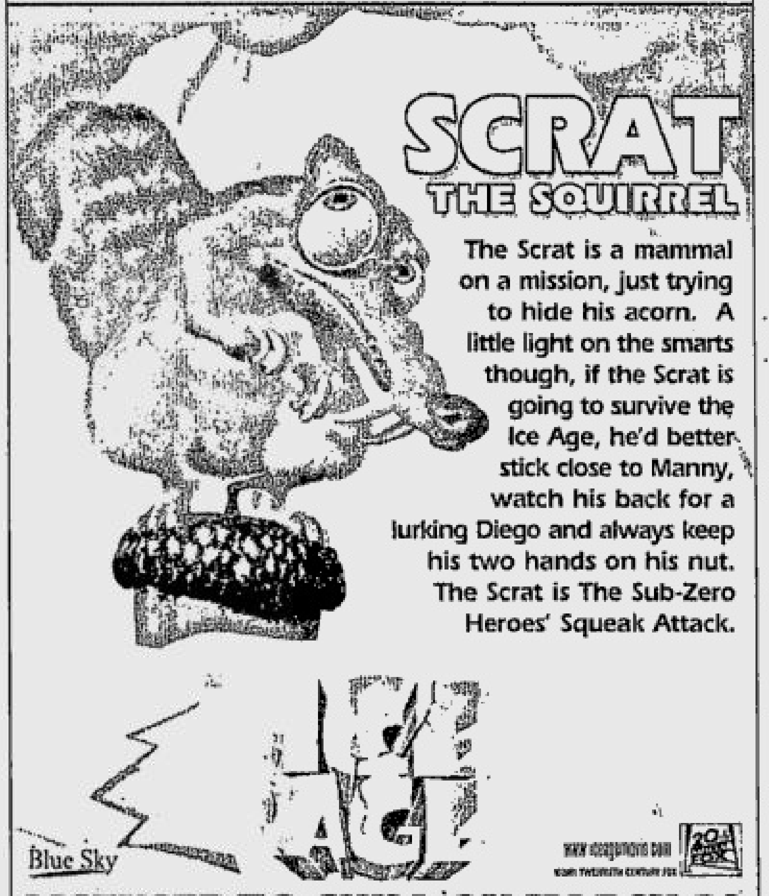


LICENSED TO CHILL ON MARCH 30

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED

SCRAT
THE SQUIRREL

The Scrat is a mammal on a mission, just trying to hide his acorn. A little light on the smarts though, if the Scrat is going to survive the Ice Age, he'd better stick close to Manny, watch his back for a lurking Diego and always keep his two hands on his nut. The Scrat is The Sub-Zero Heroes' Squeak Attack.

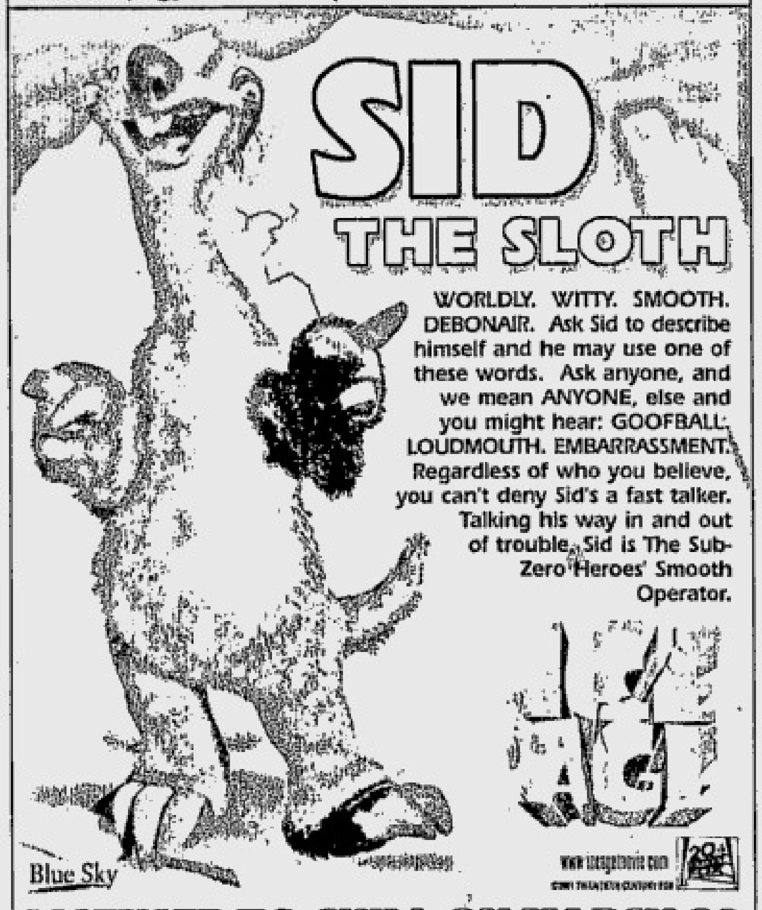


LICENSED TO CHILL ON MARCH 30

MTRCB RATING ▶ G General Patronage | ALL AGES ADMITTED

SID
THE SLOTH

WORLDLY. WITTY. SMOOTH. DEBONAIR. Ask Sid to describe himself and he may use one of these words. Ask anyone, and we mean ANYONE, else and you might hear: GOOFBALL. LOUDMOUTH. EMBARRASSMENT. Regardless of who you believe, you can't deny Sid's a fast talker. Talking his way in and out of trouble, Sid is The Sub-Zero Heroes' Smooth Operator.



LICENSED TO CHILL ON MARCH 30

'Star for a Night' looks for new Regines

SHOWBIZ TIDBITS

Leah Salterio

REGINE Velasquez completes the new Viva TV triumvirate of program hosts, with **Christopher de Leon** ("Who Wants To Be a Millionaire") and **Edu Manzano** ("The Weakest Link").

Starting March 31, Sunday, 8 p.m. on IBC 13, Regine will host the Philippine version of the popular British talent search, "Star for a Night."

The songbird herself is a product of a talent contest, "Bagong Kampeon."

The weekly winner of "Star for a Night" will take home P50,000. The semi-finals winner will earn P100,000 and a chance to compete in the finals later this year, where P1 million is at stake.

This Sunday has four contestants: *balikbayan* singer-dancer **Roxanne Castro**, 19, band member **Louella Luna**, balladeer **Emmanuel Omaga**, 17, and **Kristel Arianne Astor**, 13.

Every week, a new panel of judges will pick the winner. This Sunday's judges are TV/stage director **Fritz Ynfante**, songwriter and record producer **Vehnee Saturno**, band manager **Henry Onglatco** and Viva Records artist and repertoire manager **Civ Fontanilla**.

Regine's brother-in-law, **Raul Mitra**, who is married to her younger sister **Cacai**, is the show's musical arranger. Director is **Jon Corpus**, husband of **Veronique del Rosario**, daughter of Viva's big boss **Vic del Rosario**.

Two good shows

THE PAST two weeks, I had the chance to watch two concerts. One was an intimate performance of Regine Velasquez at Captain's Bar of Mandarin Oriental, part of the monthly Crossover series. The other was a special one-night show with **Calvin Millado** and **Anna Fegi** at Hard Rock Café, mounted by WRock 96.3.

It was Regine's return engagement at Captain's Bar and, as expected, the place was packed. The last time she was there was last June last year. In previous years, Regine always held her April birthday concert at the posh hotel lounge.

Regine doesn't just stick to the current chart-toppers when she's doing an intimate show. At Captain's Bar, she deviated from cover versions and sang songs she hadn't sung before.

She prepared her repertoire with her musical director, **Gerard Salonga.** She opened the show with the Doobie Brothers hit, "Listen to the Music," then segued to three old songs which are rarely performed onstage—**Carly Simon**'s "Man On My Mind," **Shakatak**'s "Lonely Afternoon" and **Amy Holland**'s "Never Give Up."

It was a laid-back show, with Regine singing only beautiful songs, including **John Kaizan Neptune**'s "Soft Melody," **Sheena Easton**'s "So Much in Love," **Patti Austin**'s "Say You Love Me," **Claire Marlo**'s "Till They Take My Breath Away" and a haunting version of **Esther Sutterfield**'s "Love Is Stronger Far Than We."

What is a Regine concert without the high notes? So she pleased her audience by belting out **Wendy Moten**'s "Come On In Out of the Rain," **Mariah Carey**'s "Never Too Far" and **Whitney Houston**'s "Run To You."

"Alam ko hinihintay niyo 'to para sumaya kayo," she told the appreciative crowd.

Like in the previous "Crossover Presents" format which featured comedians, **Tessie Tomas** made the audience laugh before Regine performed. **Jon Santos** and **Mitch Valdez** took their turns in the limelight in earlier "Crossover Presents" shows.

Tessie did her latest impersonation of President **Macapagal-Arroyo**, sitting in a huge chair with her feet not touching the floor, and the crowd loved her.

She was more amusing as the aging sex kitten **Bonnie Buendia**, who now wants to have a liposuction treatment.

Hard Rock was also a full house when Calvin and Anna did a back-to-back performance. It was my first time to see Anna sing live and she was good. Never mind if she didn't sing popular songs. I loved her version of **Alicia Keys**' "Fallin'," which was also well applauded.

Ana is a diminutive singer but her voice is something else.

VELASQUEZ. Product of a talent contest.

Calvin, after having been in the music business for a decade, certainly knows how to entertain the crowd. He can ad-lib and delivers his spiels well, which is a pitfall for most local performers, no matter how well they sing. Calvin can even make the audience laugh.

It was apparent that he was comfortable in the venue. If he had the jitters, they didn't show.

Some girls in the house were swooning over Calvin's well-built physique and good looks.

He opened the show with the **Kenny Loggins** hit, "Conviction of the Heart," then earned screams when he did "Superman," "I Will Be Here," "Foolish Heart" and "I'm Only Human." He also did "This is the Moment," from the Broadway musical, "Jekyll and Hide."

Mossimo the real 'star' of the concert scene

MOSSIMO is the leading clothing brand in the market today, committed to supporting the biggest stars in the local concert scene.

From Lani Misalucha's "Crossover Live" tour to Martin Nievera's "XV4-Ever" to "Symphony in F" which featured Freestyle with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra, Mossimo has supported the concert artists.

Last month, Mossimo sponsored Martin's "Crossover Adventure Continues" at the Waterfront Hotel in Lahug, Cebu, followed by a performance at La Salle Coliseum in Bacolod City and culminating in his 40th birthday concert at the Araneta Coliseum.

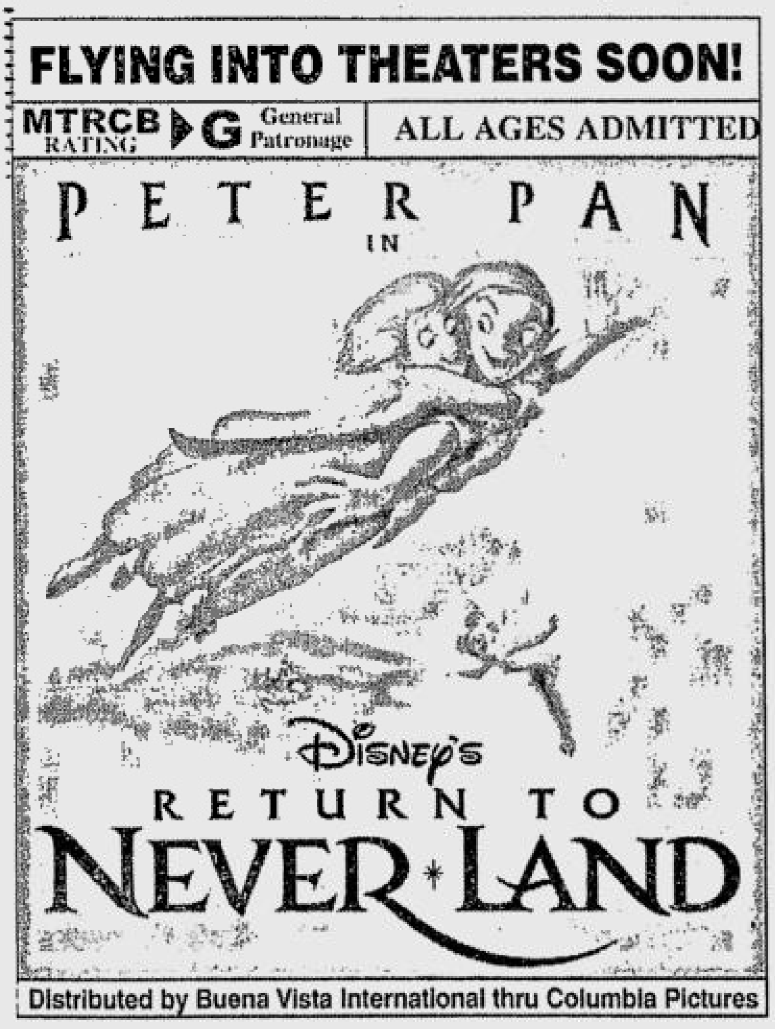
This was followed by the "Back2Back" tour with Side A and Freestyle at the Big Dome and Clark Expo in Pampanga.

Mossimo also sponsored the two-night Valentine concert of Brian McKnight and Regine Velasquez at the Araneta Coliseum.

Early this month, Mossimo helped bring French pop diva Larusso into the country.

But concerts aren't just the only events that Mossimo supports. This April, the clothing line will put its name behind the prestigious summer happening, Mossimo Bikini Summit, to be held at Boracay's Pearl of the Pacific Resort on April 20.

FRENCH diva Larusso (left) with her dancers during her Mossimo-sponsored Philippine promo tour at the NBC Tent.



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NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 BANDITS 11:50, 2:20, 4:50, 7:20, 9:50 P 13
CINEMA 2 THE MAJESTIC 12:40, 3:55, 6:55, 10:00 GP
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Relatively new films smash all-time box-office records

VIEWFINDE

Nestor U. Torre

TIME was when it took years for a film to break into the very exclusive list of the movie world's Top Five highest, all-time grossers. But something has happened in the last few years to drastically speed up the process, so we're now being presented with the unusual spectacle of a rapidly-shifting blockbuster scene:

At the top of the list is "Titanic," with a mind-boggling $1.8B in international sales. Now in second place is the latest arrival, last year's "Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone," with $926M, edging out "Star Wars Episode I—the Phantom Menace" at $922M.

Then there's "Jurassic Park" with $914M, and "Independence Day" with $807M. Since Fil-American **Dean Devlin** is one of the producers of that last film, its making it to the Top Five list is particularly noteworthy for film buffs in these parts.

The really awesome discovery is that all five mega-top grossers were produced and shown from the '90s onwards. In only a little over a decade, they have smashed the records set by the biggest blockbusters filmed and shown from the dawn of cinema through the '80s—a stunning achievement, any way you look at it.

Clearly, some big changes have been taking place lately in film production, marketing, distribution and screening that explain why the ante has gone up at the box office for grosses to grow this rapidly.

At the lower levels, the rule of thumb for blockbusters remains pretty much the same: if a film makes at least $100M, it's officially declared a hit. And it's still difficult to break through that $100M barrier. Last year, for instance, only 13 of the hundreds of movie's produced were able to do that.

So, it's not as if grosses have gone up for the entire film-producing world—just for a very few, especially blessed productions that, for some reason or other, hundreds of millions of viewers worldwide decide they *have* to view, come what may.

What could those reasons be? If you have seen all give super-blockbusters, you'll know that they are all of the fantasy and/or adventure mode. "Titanic" is unique in that it also underscored its strong love element.

Perhaps it is this additional attraction that has caused it to earn double the second-placer's gross income. But give "Harry Potter" some more months and it could end up drastically narrowing the gap.

Everything considered, however, it's still these five films' adventure or fantasy factors that account for their having made around 10 times more what most other big hits have grossed all over the world.

That's too simplistic a view of the phenomenon, of course. To earn this big, these productions had to invest more money than usual for special effect and such, because fantasy-adventure special effects, plus superior—and expensive—production values.

Star value is another consideration that adds to audience acceptability and excitement for a production. In "Titanic's" case, **Leonardo DiCaprio** didn't come cheap, that's for sure.

For these reasons, all of these five films were budgeted at over $100M, and "Titanic" is still the most expensive film of all time because it cost a numbing $200M-plus to produce.

So, these movies had to make much more than $100M just to break even. Hence their gung-ho determination to rack up grosses in the hundreds of millions of dollars. "Spend big to earn big" seems to be the formula for mega-blockbusters these days.

At the other end is the achievement of little, relatively inexpensive sleepers like "Life Is Beautiful" that have surprised veteran industry observers by also joining the hit parade.

Of course, the biggest surprise ever was pulled by "The Blair Witch Project," a student film that was made for only $20,000, and yet also ended up the winners' circle by raking in over $100M at the tills.

In general, however, it's still the combination of fantasy-adventure, big budget and some star value that works most dependably in the movies. New and veteran producers, take note. Also please observe that none of these super-hits are sex flicks. Sexy movies may still do OK in these randy parts, but on the world film scene, they're completely passé.

Crossover airs 'Story of Jesus'

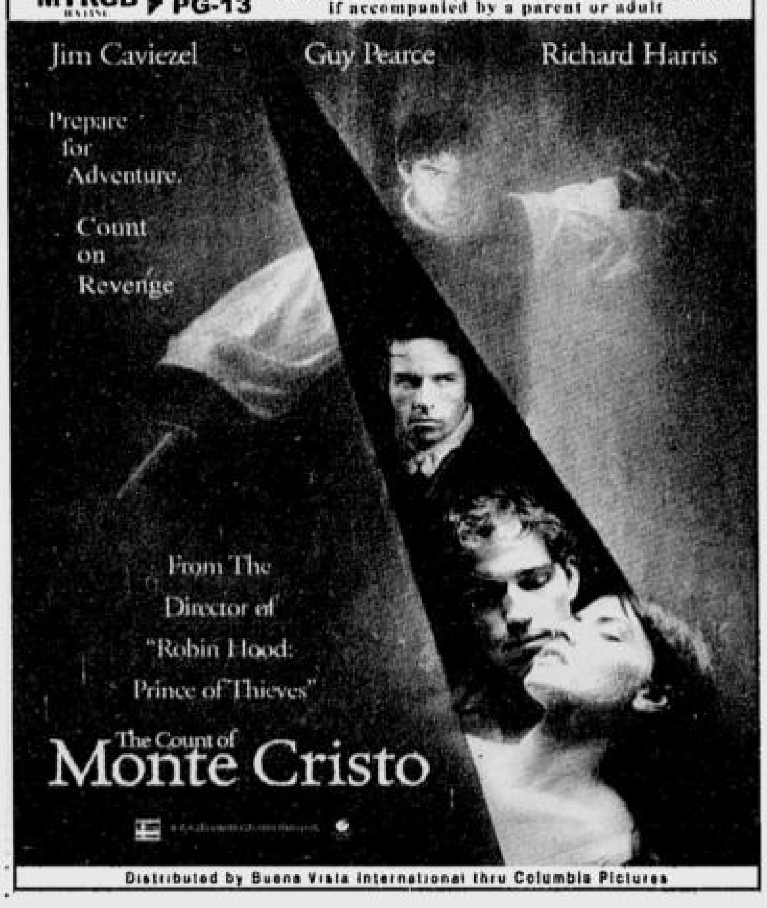
CROSSOVER 105.1 observes Holy Week by sharing with its listeners the international radio version of "The Story of Jesus."

Based on the Gospel of St. Luke, "The Story of Jesus" will air on Holy Monday, March 25, to Maundy Thursday, March 28, from 3 to 3:30 p.m. and on Black Saturday, March 30 and Easter Sunday, March 31, also from 3 to 3:30 p.m.

This Holy Week, Crossover will also keep travelling easy by giving traffic and road condition reports.

"Traffic Watch Special Project" will update listeners on what's happening in major thoroughfares and offers alternate routes for a stress-free journey.

"Traffic Watch Special Project" will be aired twice every hour on Wednesday and Thursday, from 7:15 a.m. to 7:45 p.m., Black Saturday, from 1:15 p.m. to 7:45 p.m. and Easter Sunday from 7:15 a.m. to 7:45 p.m.


Jim Caviezel
Guy Pearce
Richard Harris
Prepare for Adventure.
Count on Revenge
From The Director of "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves"
The Count of Monte Cristo

REVENGE, ROMANCE, ACTION ! COUNT ON IT APRIL 3 !
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Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures

RODEL VELAYO
ALLONA AMOR
WINSTON ELIZALDE
CELSO AD CASTILLO
as Mang Tonio
"Heart has its reasons which mind cannot understand."
and introducing
DIANA ZUBIRI
ITLOG
directed by
FRANCIS 'JUN' POSADAS
A SEIKO Films presentation

OPENS WEDNESDAY APRIL 3 !
MTRCB RATING R-18 Strictly for ADULTS No one below 18 yrs. may be admitted
A WOMAN SEEKING LIBERATION
A LOVE THAT WIL REDEEM THEM ALL!

AFTER KAMASUTRA COMES...
PLAYBOY
MARSHA YUEH
PLAYBOY'S CENTERFOLDS
SNAKE CHARMER

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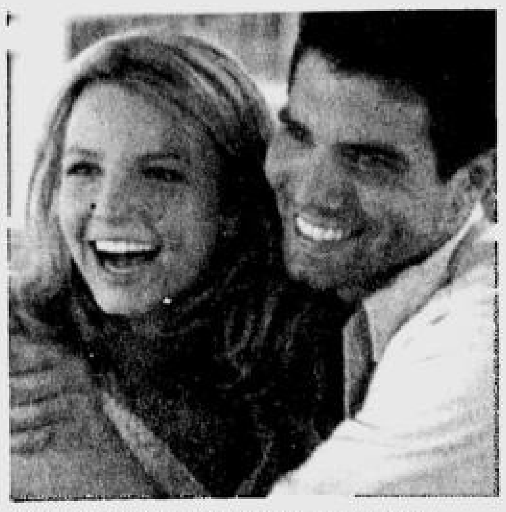

SPEARS with costar Anson Mount in "Crossroads." From singing to acting.

Britney makes film debut

POP princess Britney Spears storms the big screen as the young and sexy Lucy, who discovers her inner personality in "Crossroads."

In search of her long-lost mother (Kim Cattrall), Lucy went on a trip with her childhood friends, bitchy Kit (Zoe Saldana) and pregnant, trailer-trash Mimi (Taryn Manning). They hitch a ride with Ben (Anson Mount), an affable slacker who helps Lucy transform herself into a singer, as well as a full-fledged woman.

Spears' big screen debut reminds audiences of another wartime pop goddess, Betty Grable, a pin-up girl whose popularity and talents were comparable with Spears.

Spears has a fawn-like prettiness and an ingratiating, sweet and sexy quality which aptly registers Lucy's good-girl role. However, in the film's most hilarious moment, she drops this as quickly as she does in any of her suggestively transformational video appearances.

In an effort to scrape some bucks, Lucy nervously enters a singing competition. Singing publicly for the first time, she nervously approaches the stage, checks the mike with a smart tap, then jiggles with savvy aplomb to "I Love Rock 'n Roll."

Spears' familiar image has been delivered with heartless precision by the filmmakers in the first scene on "Crossroads," which sees her bouncing around her bedroom, lip-synching to Madonna, while clad in see-through bra and panties.

In an acting highlight where she cries after being rejected by her mom, Spears acquits herself with an emotional accuracy that has always eluded her idol, Madonna, onscreen.

Cocoy holds solo concert at The Tent

LAUREL

AFTER his successful theater stint in the London and Australian productions of "Miss Saigon," Cocoy Laurel returns to the concert stage with a solo show, "Journey of the Heart," April 26 at the NBC Tent in Fort Bonifacio.

Cocoy has been touring the world stage following his success in "Miss Saigon," where he was initially cast as the assistant commissar and later the Engineer.

The concert "Journey of the Heart" will chronicle Cocoy's personal journey as artist. His repertoire includes "Traveling Boy," "What's Love Got To Do With It," a Supreme's medley with Cocoy singing with an all-male back-up band and some male dancers, a nostalgia section of songs from the Big Band era, a Spanish suite, Beatles medley and OPM tunes.

Also featured in the show are Powerdance Dancers, The Madrigals and an ensemble of guest artists.

Director is Douglas Nierras, musical director is Ian Monsod. Leo Rialp designs a baroque-inspired stage.

POWER PLANT
CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

BANDITS - P 13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30	JIMMY NEUTRON - GP 11:30, 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30	A BEAUTIFUL MIND - P 13 1:10, 3:55, 6:40
MAJESTIC - GP 12:30, 3:30, 6:30	GOOD ADVICE - P 13 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00	JOHN Q - P 13 11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

NOW SHOWING! A BLOOD-SOAKED TERRIFYING TALE!

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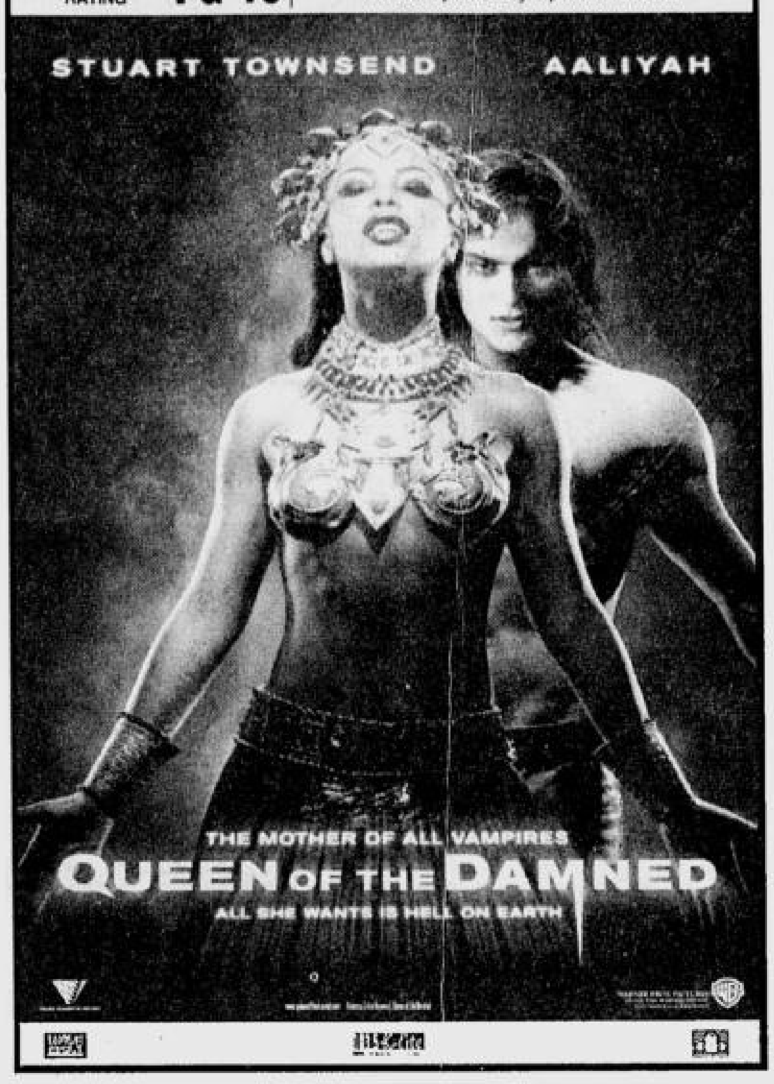
STUART TOWNSEND
AALIYAH
THE MOTHER OF ALL VAMPIRES
QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
ALL SHE WANTS IS HELL ON EARTH

NOW SHOWING

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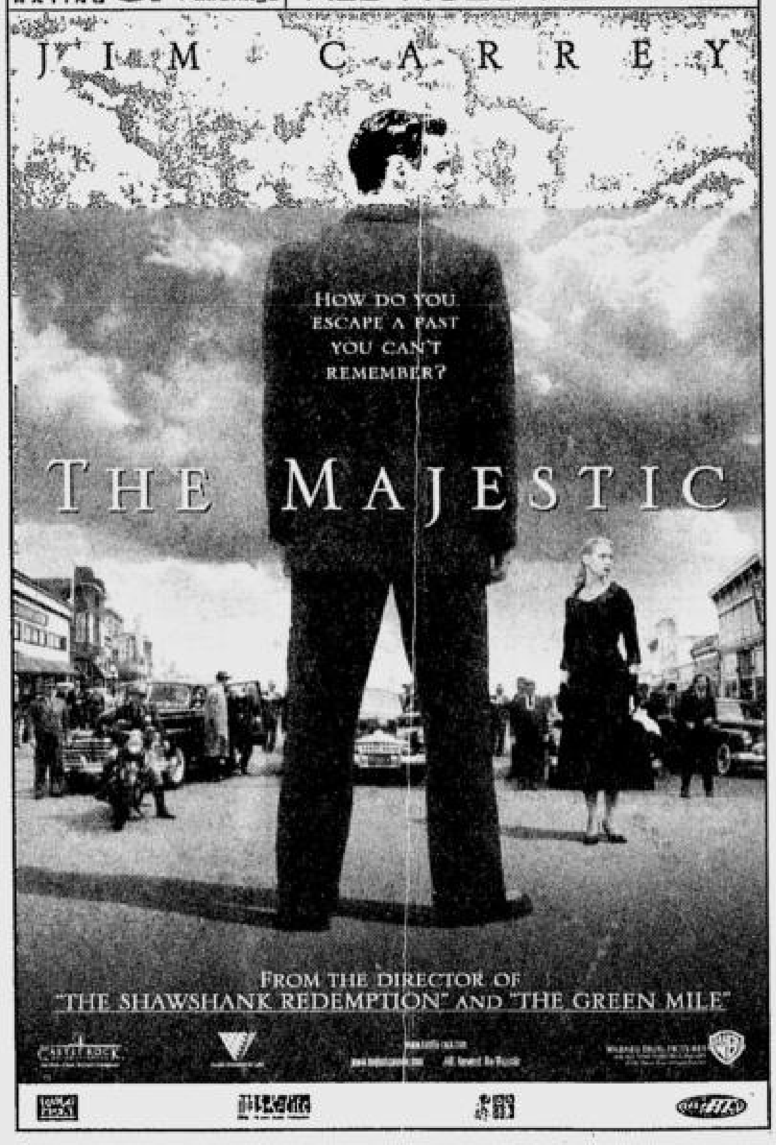
JIM CARREY
HOW DO YOU ESCAPE A PAST YOU CAN'T REMEMBER?
THE MAJESTIC
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF "THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION" AND "THE GREEN MILE"

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Friends don't let friends date psycho women from hell.
EVIL WOMAN

Wild, sexy new comedy!

'Evil Woman' opens April 3 !

In the tradition of their hit laugh-a-minute movies, **Jason Biggs** of **AMERICAN PIE**, **Jack Black** of **SHALLOW HAL** and **Steve Zahn** of **DR. DOLITTLE 2** join comic forces in the hot and sexy new comedy from Columbia Pictures, EVIL WOMAN.

Darren (Biggs), Wayne (Zahn) and J.D. (Black) have been best of friends since 5th grade. They swore nothing could come between them...un til she came along.

Judith (Amanda Peet) sizzles with sex appeal but is really a cold-hearted and manipulative bitch. She digs her claws into Darren and snatches him from the friendship!

Darren must be rescued at all cost from the clutches of the evil woman, launching a series of side-splitting misadventures. **(Rated R for nudity and sexual humor.)**

AYALA CINEMAS
ARTFILM GREENBELT
OPENS MARCH 30 (Sat.)
Art Film

Courtney Cox Arquette
Vincent Gallo
Jeffrey Tambor
Tate Donovan
GET WELL SOON
JUSTIN McCARTHY

AN EXCLUSIVE PHILIPPINE PREMIERE

"A twisted romantic comedy in the spirit of *THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT MARY*".

GET WELL SOON

starring
Courtney Cox Arquette
(Scream, "Friends," Ace Ventura Pet Detective)
Vincent Gallo
(Buffalo'66, House of the Spirits)
Jeffrey Tambor
(Girl Interrupted, There's Something About Mary)
Tate Donovan
(Murder at 1600, Ethan Frome)

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

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Glorietta 4, Cinema 3

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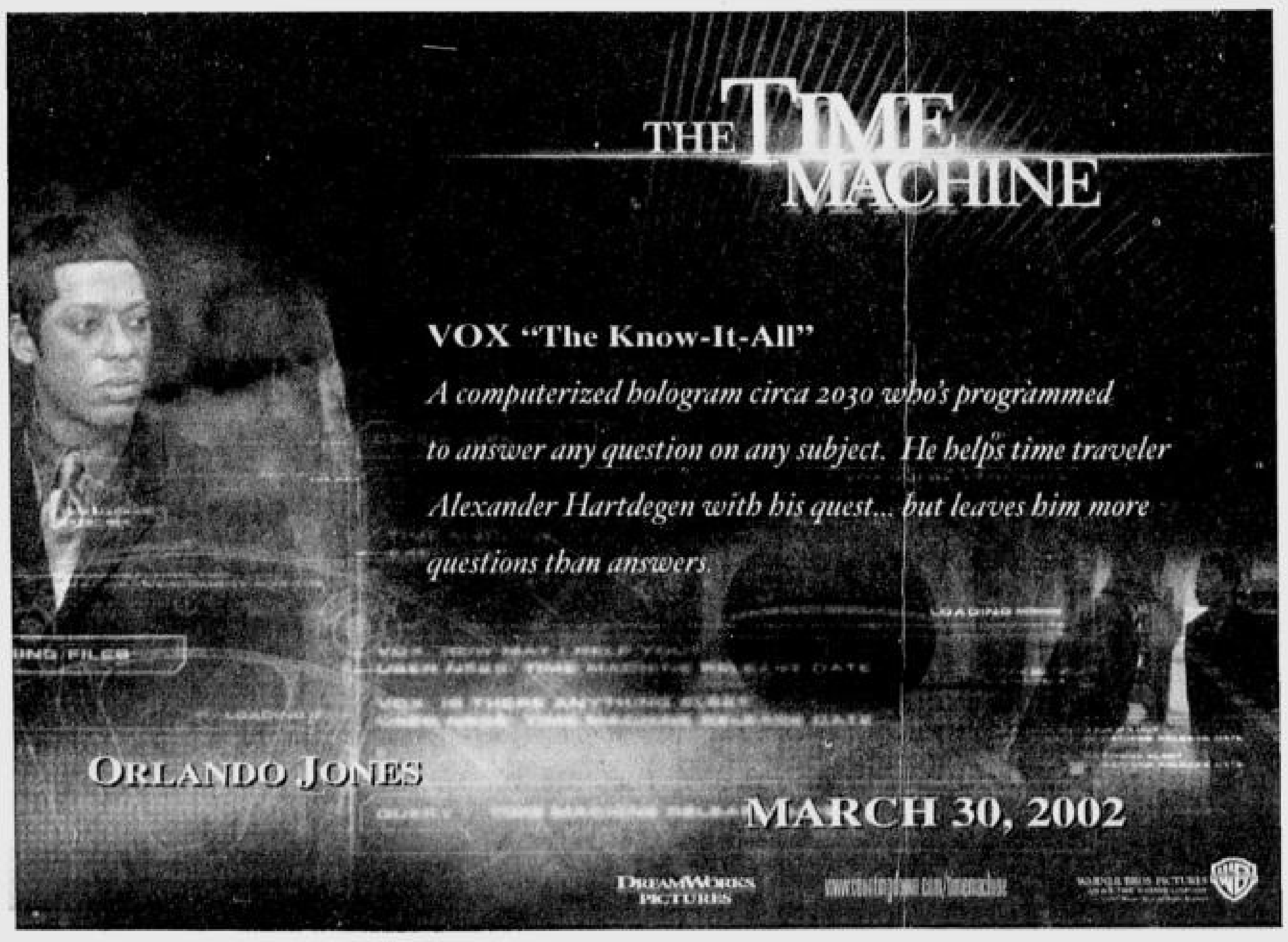

VOX "The Know-It-All"

A computerized hologram circa 2030 who's programmed to answer any question on any subject. He helps time traveler Alexander Hartdegen with his quest... but leaves him more questions than answers.

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

Sword-and-sandal epics of Holy Week

By Paul P. Lee
Contributor

FOR movie lovers, Holy Week is also the time of year when overblown sets coupled with hammy acting and lots of swords and sandals rule both the theaters and the boob tube.

I think I've lost the number of times I've seen Cecil B. de Mille's "The Ten Commandments" on the tube. Long before an animated facsimile of Val Kilmer took his turn in toting the Tablets from Mt. Sinai in "The Prince of Egypt," Moses has been identified with this dude who has been connected with the Republican Party and the National Rifle Association.

A cigar for anyone who can guess who the undisputed King of the Sword and Sandal Biblical Epic and Mr. Holy Week is. Give up? Does the name Charlton Heston ring a bell?

Certainly everyone else's parents and grandparents (most likely everyone else's great-grandparents) must have seen "The Ten Commandments" despite the acid gnawing on that old Technicolor film stock.

Aside from the big screen, on which your father and grandfather (maybe your great-grandfather) certainly must have watched it in all its wide-screen glory, the only other way you can catch "The Ten Commandments" is on VHS or on DVD.

It's also the time of year when local TV stations dig out those old sword-and-sandal biblical epics from their vaults and air them straight from Maundy Thursday to Black Saturday to go with the usual talking heads of priests or preachers endlessly gabbing on the significance of the Man's crucifixion.

If you're too lazy to go to the theaters, you can settle down and put "The Ten Commandments" in your VCR or DVD player while trying to drown out the chanting of the *pasyon* next door. Then you can add "The Prince of Egypt" to your Holy Week viewing fare and compare and contrast the sibling rivalry between Heston's Moses and Yul Brynner's Rameses, and Val Kilmer's Moses and Ralph Fiennes' Rameses.

In case you're wondering Yul who? perhaps "The King and I" (long before Chow Yun-Fat stepped in as the King of Siam) and "The Magnificent Seven" ought to jog your memory.

'Ben Hur'

As for Mr. Heston himself, "Planet of the Apes" may have been his best performance to date, but since this is Holy Week, we'll have to set aside his cavorting with the chimps.

When not being gang-raped by talking gorillas, Heston did horse around doing his antediluvian Michael Schumacher impersonation in another one of his signature pieces identified with this time of the year, "Ben Hur."

The 1961 classic by William Wyler is a remake of the silent version in the 1920s starring Ramon Navarro. Ben Hur is sold into slavery after being betrayed by his childhood friend Messala, played with loathsome gusto by the late Stephen Boyd. In turn, Ben Hur takes his revenge on his former friend while searching for his family. After dispatching his erstwhile friend, he finds both religion and his family.

While Heston may have cornered biblical cinema with his overblown acting complementing those overblown sets, there are others worth mentioning.

There was "Quo Vadis." Peter Ustinov's turn as the debauched and effeminate Emperor Nero was fun and hokey. Compared to Ustinov's comically corrupt Nero, the other performances in "Quo Vadis," including that of Deborah Kerr as a Christian slave, would remind you of a pillar of salt.

And the aforementioned Yul Brynner again filled a pair of sandals, this time in the lead role as the King of Israel in "Solomon and Sheba." Unlike "The Ten Commandments" and "Quo Vadis," "Solomon and Sheba" enjoys less screenings. Maybe people back then weren't ready to see a Brynner complete with hair and beard?

'Spartacus'

The late, great Stanley Kubrick's "Spartacus" represented the pinnacle of the sword-and-sandal epic, complete with Kirk Douglas who would have made a better Moses since he is a real Jew. Spartacus has also become a regular Holy Week staple, although it lacks biblical connotations aside from fact that Spartacus was crucified and left to die on the cross at the end.

In "The Robe," Richard Burton finds both a bathrobe and religion at the same time. I swear that, if not for the biblical story, "The Greatest Story Ever Told" would have passed as agitprop.

But if it is a great film based on the gospels you're looking for, then look for Pier Paolo Pasolini's "The Gospel According to St. Mathew." With its lack of pretense and spectacle, "St. Mathew" may not sit well with those used to the empty spectacle of a Hollywood gospel epic. Pasolini brought a refreshing degree of honesty to a genre that had been long bamboozled by the false gods of Babylon.

COMEBACK OF THE YEAR. Eddie Garcia scores a Best Director award.

GLAMOUR MODE. Lorna Tolentino clinches Best Actress.

SECOND IN A ROW. Ricky Davao wins Best Actor.

TEARS OF JOY AND SORROW. Best Supporting Actress Caridad Sanchez.

AGELESS. Gloria Romero receives a Lifetime Achievement award.

No parade of stars in this year's FAP awards

By Alex Y. Vergara

ALESSANDRA de Rossi has probably gotten used to winning, it must have come as an unpleasant surprise to her when veteran performer Caridad Sanchez edged her out as best supporting actress in the recent Film Academy of the Philippines awards.

Tell us it was just our imagination. We could have sworn she said the word "*putris*" after Caridad's name was called.

From then on Alessandra had become noticeably edgy. Not even seatmate and manager Manny Valera could restrain her as she walked up and down the aisle several times with her trusty cell phone.

In a huff

According to a source, the young star wanted to leave as soon as Caridad finished her speech. Manny reportedly told her to sit still and shut up. There are other awards up for grabs in the coming weeks, young lady.

In the end, however, Alessandra had walked out of the venue, reportedly got the car key from her driver and drove off in a huff. Better luck next time.

In contrast, big sister and best actress nominee Assunta de Rossi stayed behind and behaved like a real star. But she lost the top acting plum to a more experienced Lorna Tolentino.

It was also a night of reunions, welcomed or otherwise. The tension between erstwhile *kumpadres* Phillip Salvador and Bong Revilla Jr. was quite palpable as the two intermittently shared the stage as cohosts. Thank God, Lorna was sandwiched between them.

Bong, a last minute GMA convert, had become the odd-man-out in the presence of pro-Erap loyalists Phillip and Lorna.

Speaking of Phillip, the actor has noticeably aged and gained weight during his nearly yearlong hiatus. The wannabe politician had reportedly sulked and avoided the show biz scene soon after losing in his vice mayoral bid for Mandaluyong.

Bong looked ill at ease, while Phillip appeared indifferent toward him during station breaks.

Lorna was as lovely as ever in Paul Cabral's strapless pink and black column. ***(Watch out for Lifestyle's fashion review this Sunday.)***

STRONGER THAN EVER. Fernando Poe Jr. earns a Golden Reel award.

JUSTICE FOR NIDA! Delia Razon kisses Kay Jones Torres, while Nestor De Villa looks on.

PHOTOS BY JOAN BONDOC

INTO THE GROOVE. Jao Mapa and Antoinette Taus.

GOLDEN GIRL. Kuh Ledesma pays tribute to the King.

Scam players

Ruffa Gutierrez and Nannette Medved, two key players in the infamous 1994 Manila Film Festival scam, resurfaced as host and annotator, respectively. Whistleblower and comeback star Gretchen Barretto earlier opened the show with "As If We Never Said Goodbye" from the Broadway musical Sunset Boulevard." Norma Desmond Gretchen was definitely not. She glowed in a strapless gown with a willowy extension by Inno Sotto.

For the first time in years, the affair was held at the UP Theater instead of the more formal PICC Reception Hall. The theater's nondescript lobby had been decked with real plants and a series of fountains. Several tables were set up for the stars and their guests to enjoy the cocktails.

It also marked the first time producers had done away with the much-awaited traditional parade of stars to the tune of "Handog." They've probably forgotten to allot enough budget for the singer. Thankfully, the entire ceremony was short and sweet.

Dance numbers

Maribeth Bicharra had choreographed several show-stopping dance numbers, and she made sure everybody knew about them. Soon after her dancers took a bow, an ecstatic Maribeth rushed onstage to give them a pat in the back, a kiss or a hug. Come on, Maribeth, we know you're good. You don't have to rub it in.

Among the early birds were veteran stars Fernando Poe Jr., Eddie Garcia, Tony Ferrer and Vic Vargas. Robert Arevalo and Barbara Perez chatted with Luis Gonzales, while Gloria Romero and Nestor de Villa shared a table on opposite side of the lobby.

The King hasn't lost his touch with the fans all these years. He caused a stir everywhere he went as people waited to have their pictures taken with him. A lull was punctuated by screams as FPJ entered the theater midway into the program. He accepted the Golden Reel award, one of several special awards given that night.

Eddie Garcia also caused quite a commotion as he made his way into the theater. The septuagenarian *Manoy* looked as dashing as ever as he accepted his best director trophy for "Abakada Ina."

If anything, this year's edition of FAP proved to be a night of veteran stars.

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BUSINESS

Editor Raul O. Marcelo *Assistant Editor* Corrie S. Narisma

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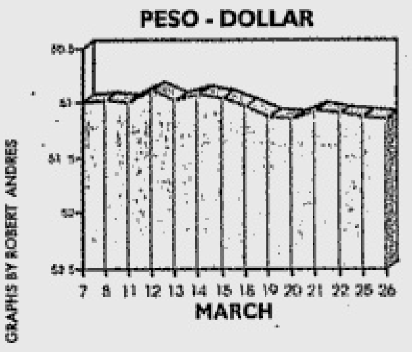
Cement prices up on strong demand

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱51.145 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 26, 2002

¥132.84 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 26, 2002

GOLD: **$296.50/297**

per ounce Hong Kong,
March 26, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Stocks down

SHARES yesterday drifted aimlessly ahead of the Easter holiday break, with the main index ending off slightly on some light selling of selected large caps, traders said.

The main index closed down 6.18 points, or 0.44 percent, at 1,407.13 points.

Turnover reached P470.40 million from P380.44 million on Monday with 17 advancers, 38 decliners and 46 counters unchanged.

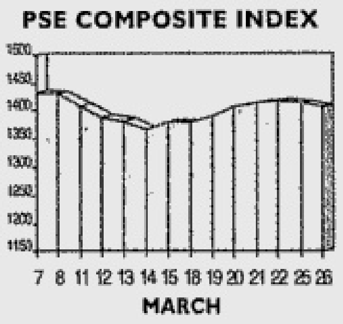
With shortened trading hours on Wednesday and national holidays looming on Thursday and Friday, investors have been squaring positions and exiting the market, traders said, adding there are scant leads to entice interest.

"It's the lack of news telling on this market and since its a short week people have begun going on vacation with both big buyers and sellers absent," DBS Vickers associate sales director Enrique Santa Ana said.

He added the market was likely to continue its drifting pattern on Wednesday as the already thin market activity dwindled even further.

The Philippine Stock Exchange said there would be no afternoon trading on Wednesday with the bourse operating from 9:30 a.m. to 12:10 p.m.

Reuters



(See stock market report on Page B2)

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE PRICE of cement has surged by nearly 10 percent this month as the Department of Trade and Industry admitted sporadic supply shortage in Metro Manila and Regions 3 and 4 due to a spurt in construction activities.

The latest DTI Price Monitoring survey showed that cement prices in the country's top three cement markets posted the biggest increases in prices—9.38 percent to P140 this month from P128 in February in Region 3; 8 percent to P135 per 40-kilogram bag in March from P125 last month in the National Capital Region, and 7.41 percent to P145 this month from P135 in February in Region 4.

The DTI noted that cement prices peaked at P145 per bag in Regions 2, 4, 12 and the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao while the cheapest was at P97 in Region 7.

The recent price hike occurred just a few months after the DTI imposed a provisional duty of P20.60 per bag on cement imports in December last year which made it more expensive to bring in cement from Indonesia or Japan. The Philippine Cement Manufacturers Corp., the umbrella organization of cement makers in the country, had promised to keep cement prices between P125 and 135 per bag in exchange for the imposition of the provisional duty.

Trade and Industry Secretary Manuel A. Roxas II said his agency had verified the cement supply shortfall in Metro Manila, Regions 3 and 4 although the scant supply was only spotty and not extensive throughout these areas.

Roxas said a DTI probe of the issue showed that the shortfall was due to a surge in construction activities in the country. "I think it has to do with the dramatic upsurge in the confidence of the business community which has led them to push the green light to go ahead with their projects."

He said the DTI had received complaints from a number of subdivision developers who had to wait for up to three days to get their deliveries.

The DTI's findings were in sharp contrast to the claim of Philcemcor that the shortage was "artificial" as it was caused by unscrupulous end-users that hoarded cement triggering price speculations in the market. Roxas said the DTI monitoring team had yet to see any

CEMENT/ B3

Peso seen to stabilize at 50-51.75 to $1

By Clarissa S. Batino

HSBC yesterday projected the peso stabilizing at 50 to 51.75 to the dollar this year. This level is expected to support a continued decline in the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' overnight rates and in the cost of government borrowings.

HSBC Phils. treasurer John McGowan told reporters yesterday that while the bank was not expecting the peso to bounce back to 45 to $1, it was unlikely for the local currency to depreciate to 55 to $1 level or the exchange rate levels during the administration of ousted President Joseph Estrada.

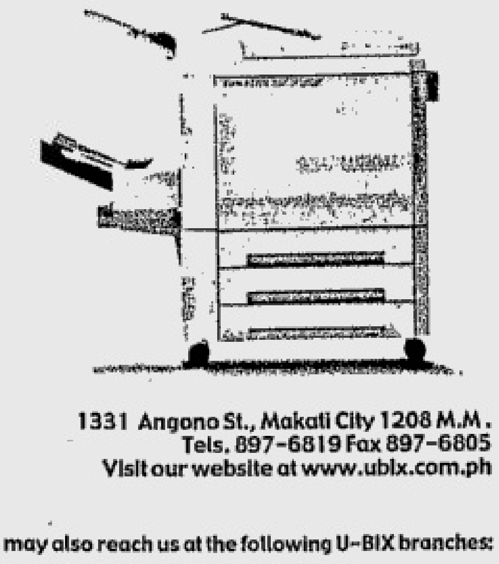
"We are not going to see anything dramatic in the peso this year. It would likely trade within the range of 50 to 51.75 to $1 for the rest of the year," said McGowan.

The BSP, for its part, earlier said the peso should average at between 50 and 51 to a

PESO/ B3

CITIBANK EXECS MEET WITH GMA VAL HANDUMON

Citibank N.A. chair and CEO Victor J. Meneses (center) and the bank's country corporate officer for the Philippines Catherine Weir (left) paid a courtesy call on President Macapagal-Arroyo last Monday. Meneses was in the country from March 24 to 26 for Citibank's centennial celebrations.



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$170-M MRT bond float lures 10 local banks, insurance firms

By Abigail L. Ho

AT least 10 local banks and insurance companies have set their sights on Metro Rail Transit Corp.'s $170-million asset-backed securitization bonds, according to a highly placed company source.

The MRTC consortium has decided to postpone its plan to issue these bonds, which is being handled by German investment firm HypoVereinsbank, to give Philippine investors more chances to take part in it.

A person familiar with the matter said five Philippine-based commercial banks and five financial institutions were keen on investing in the bonds.

"This makes it interesting for the group because we already know these people. We know them better than any foreign investor because they are based here," he told the Inquirer.

He declined to disclose the names of these banks and financial institutions, citing non-disclosure agreements among the parties involved, but he hinted that the five financial institutions were mostly insurance firms.

The Insurance Commission is treating the MRTC bonds as "admitted assets" to allow insurance companies to invest in them.

Several foreign groups have already expressed interest in investing in these bonds, but the consortium behind the transaction is still waiting for a favorable international credit rating.

"The challenge is the need for a credit rating. There are so many requirements for this, all financial in nature, that they already impact on the cost of the transaction," a person familiar with the matter said.

He added that this was one reason why the MRTC consortium decided to put the deal on hold for 45 days.

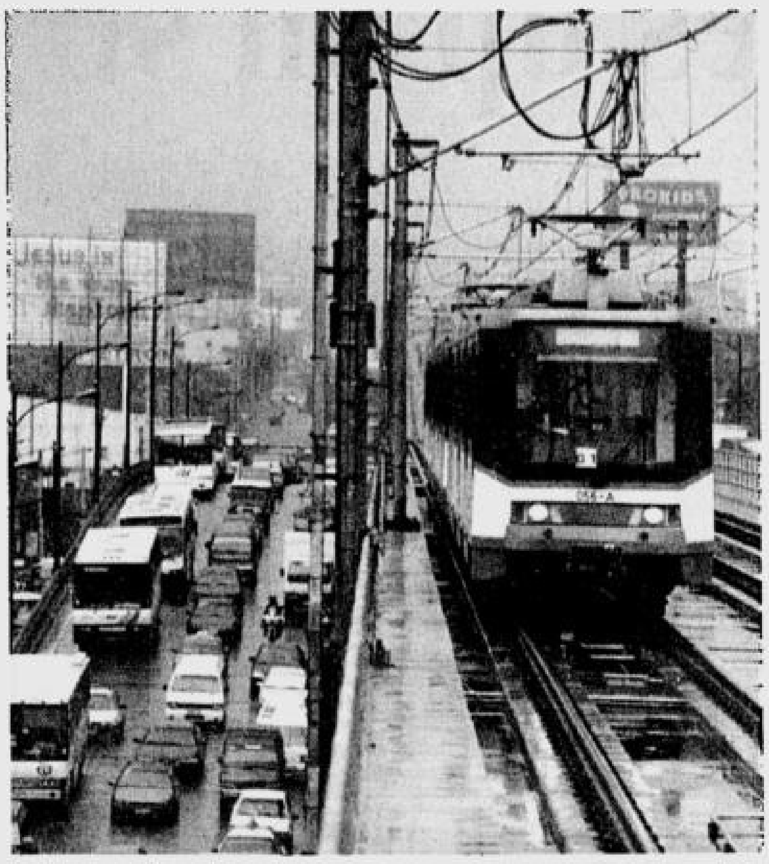
The group is said to be anticipating a further decline in interest rates.

Floating the bonds now will most likely be more expensive than waiting it out for the next two months, according to a company official.

HypoVereinsbank was slated to close a deal on March 5, but the consortium shelved it to allow more local investors to come in as well as to wait for an improved Philippine credit rating.

Among the participants in the bond flotation are Fil-Estate Management Inc., Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp., Ramcar Inc., Allante Realty and Development Inc. and DBH Inc.

Ayala Land Inc. and Greenfield Development Corp., both members of the MRTC consortium, opted not to participate in the transaction.



A METRO Rail Transit coach glides over heavy traffic along a major thoroughfare. A consortium of MRT investors is hoping to raise some $170 million through bonds.

BAP names RCBC's Virata as new prexy

By Doris C. Dumlao

VIRATA

THE INFLUENTIAL Bankers Association of the Philippines has elected Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. vice chair Cesar Virata as its new president.

In a circular to its members, the BAP said it has also named 15 new directors and key officers.

The group said it has elected as vice president Banco Santander Philippines Inc. president Jesus Jacinto.

Banco de Oro Universal Bank vice chair Jesus Jacinto has been named secretary, while JP Morgan Chase & Co. country office Robert Panlilio will serve as treasurer.

Apart from handling top posts in the Yuchengco group of companies, Virata, 71, has been chair and president of C. Virata and Associates Inc. Management Consultants since 1986.

Virata took the helm of the BAP from Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. vice chair Placido Mapa.

Virata, a prime minister under the Marcos administration, is a key officer of several companies, including RCBC Savings Bank, RCBC Capital Corp., RCBC Forex Brokers Corp., RCBC Realty Corp., Nippon Life Co. of the Philippines, Businessworld Publishing Corp., Belle Corp., Coastal Road Corp., Luisita Industrial Park Corp., Pacific Fund Inc., Pacific Plans Inc., LGU Guarantee Corp., Mapua Institute of Technology, Bankard Inc. and YCG Corporate Services Inc.

Apart from serving as prime minister, Virata has held other key posts under the Marcos administration.

He was finance minister and a member of the Monetary Board from 1970 to 1986, and a Philippine governor for the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

PLDT seen paying debts until 2004

THE PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. will likely be able to pay its maturing debts between this year and 2004, according to investment banks ABN Amro ING Barings and Barclays Capital.

In its March report, ABN Amro said PLDT, the country's No. 1 telecommunications company, already had the money to pay its maturing debts this year.

Most of its obligations, however, are set to mature in 2003 and 2004.

"These could be met by a combination of bank debts, fixed-income investments and partial asset sale," ABN Amro said.

In January, PLDT secured a $149-million refinancing deal from German development bank Kreditstanstalt fur Wiederaufbau.

PLDT president and chief executive Manuel Pangilinan recently concluded a multimillion-dollar loan agreement with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation.

PLDT plans to issue $500 million worth of bonds to cover some of its P83.5 billion in maturing obligations.

"Market concerns regarding PLDT's debt obligations seem to have been overplayed, as these are mainly due to debt maturity roll-over risk and not issues of whether or not the business can survive as a going concern," ABN Amro said.

PLDT is expecting over P1.5 billion in dividends from its mobile phone unit, Smart Communications Inc., according to ING Barings.

Banks' property risks down 11%

LENDINGS of the country's commercial banks to the real estate sector accounted for 11 percent of total outstanding loans as of end December, little changed from the previous quarter's 11.6 percent, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

The real estate loans, inclusive of interbank loans, were also generally flat from year-ago levels of 11.5 percent, it said in a statement.

Past due portion of real estate loans went down to 25.3 percent or 2.8 percent of total outstanding loans compared to the previous quarter's 26.4 percent or 3 percent of total loans.

However, the past due portion as of end December was higher than the year ago comparison of 22.3 percent or 2.6 percent of total loans.

The figures are for both bank proper and trust department. The highest real estate loan exposure of the bank proper went to development of commercial property, the central bank said.

The banking industry's exposure to the real estate sector, inclusive of equity stakes in property, amounted to P195 billion, down 0.4 percent from last quarter and down 4.1 percent from a year ago.

Non-performing loans in the country's banking sector remain high at 18.3 percent at end-January, one of the factors hindering bank lending, which dropped 3.2 percent year-on-year in January. *Reuters*

Equitable sees 2002 net at ₱500M

EQUITABLE PCI Bank Inc. is looking at a minimum net income this year of P500 million, more than four times its 2001 net, its president and chief executive, Rene Buenaventura, said yesterday.

Asked about local media reports that the bank was likely to post P500 million in net income in 2002, Buenaventura told Reuters: "That's the minimum we are looking at. It is a little over three times (from 2001)."

The bank reported a net income of P119.18 million in 2001.

Equitable announced earlier that its near-term plan was to raise capital and dispose of its bad assets through an asset management company.

Equitable chair Antonio Go said the bank would still pursue a plan to accept new investors through the so-called tier 2 scheme.

Buenaventura said the bank would concentrate this year on rebuilding its strengths. *Reuters*

Banco de Oro files for ₱2-B initial public offering

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank, a member of the SM group of companies, has filed with the Philippine Stock Exchange its application for its scheduled public listing in May this year.

Documents show that the bank is hoping to raise between P1.582 billion and P2.1 billion from the offering.

Banco de Oro is set to issue 32.69 million shares through a primary offering and another 56.35 million shares through a secondary offering.

The offer price has been set at P17.80 to P23.80 per share.

The IPO will cover 10 percent of the bank's total outstanding shares.

Banco de Oro started its operations as a universal bank in 1996 after the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas granted its permit in late 1995.

The bank has consistently and steadily grew since the Sy family acquired it in 1976.

Last year, Banco de Oro ranked among the top five banks in terms of growth in total resources, deposits and loans. It was ranked 13th in resources and 11th in deposits, loans and capital as of Dec. 14, 2001.

Banco de Oro's non-performing loans ratio stands at 11.4 percent, better than the industry average of 17.4 percent, while its capital-to-risk assets ratio is one of the industry's highest at 21.96 percent. Currently, it has a total network of 120 branches with plans for continued expansion.

Banco de Oro offers a wide array of products and services to its clients. Apart from deposits and placements, loans and trade financing, it also provides trust and investment services, cash management services, foreign exchange and securities dealing as well as financial and investment advisory services.

In recent years, the bank has been involved in major structured securities deals and was one of the lead underwriters in the first 25-year bond of the government through its wholly owned investment arm, Banco de Oro Capital and Investment Corp.

The bank has entered into a joint-venture agreement with Assicurazoni Generali SpA, one of the largest insurance groups in the world and formed its insurance affiliates, Generali Pilipinas Life Assurance Co. and Generali Pilipinas Insurance Co.

Last year, Banco de Oro merged with Dao Heng Bank Philippines, a wholly owned subsidiary of Dao Heng Bank Ltd. ***Doris C. Dumlao***

Gov't drops representation plan

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance has dropped a plan to set a 50-percent ceiling on deductions involving representation and advertising expenses of companies, according to Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Rene Bañez.

Bañez said the DOF and BIR were now set on imposing a cap for every industry, mindful that different sectors were operating in a variety of ways.

Businesses are currently allowed to deduct as costs of their operation all expenses related to representation, advertising, promotions and transportation.

The government believes the allowance is being widely abused and is one of the factors contributing to the P60 billion in revenue leakage yearly from corporate taxpayers.

Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho said he wanted the BIR to issue within the first half of the year a revenue regulation that would rationalize allowable deductions for representation.

"We were targeting to do this during the first quarter. I hope we can do it in April," he said. ***Clarissa S. Batino***

DISCLOSURES

THE BOARD of **Ayala Land Inc.** has approved an increase in its bond issue size from P2 billion to P3 billion.

* * *

ABOITIZ Equity Ventures Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 13, 4 p.m., at Ballroom I of City Sports Club Cebu.

* * *

PORFIRIO de Guzman has been elected director of **EEI Corp.** effective March 15, replacing Monico Jacob who has resigned.

* * *

THE ANNUAL stockholders' meeting of **F&J Price Holdings Corp.** scheduled on April 12 has been postponed to a latter date, which will be fixed by the board in its next meeting.

* * *

THE ANNUAL stockholders' meeting of **First Philippine Holdings Corp.** will be held on May 20.

Compiled by Armin P. Adina, PDI Research

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Tuesday, March 26, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	68	68	66.5	67	114,700
China Banking Corp.	600	605	600	605	1,240
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	3,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	36	37	35	36.5	589,700
First E-Bank Corp.	2.36	2.38	2.36	2.38	48,000
Global Business Bank Inc.	75	80.5	75	80.5	300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	43.5	44	43.5	44	53,500
Prudential Bank	450	450	450	450	195,290
Philippine National Bank	68	68	68	68	700
Phil. Savings Bank	28	29	28	29	12,600
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	13	13	27,700
Security Bank Corp.	19.25	19.25	19.25	19.25	2,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	21.25	21.25	21.25	21.25	21,100
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.32	1.32	40,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.39	450,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1305	1305	1305	1305	50
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	40,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1035	1040	1035	1040	300
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	34	34	34	34	5,900
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67	18,990,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	800	805	800	805	29,290
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.0575	0.06	0.0575	0.06	4,700,000
Piltel	0.44	0.44	0.43	0.44	1,930,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	200,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	530	535	530	535	50,620
Ivantage Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	20,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	5,300,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	30.5	30.5	29.5	30	98,800
Manila Electric Co. B	46.5	46.5	44.5	44.5	588,300
Petron Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.82	1,878,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	40,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.48	2.55	2.48	2.5	821,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.89	0.9	0.83	0.9	100,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.7	5.8	5.7	5.8	40,000
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	22.75	22.75	22.75	22.75	16,000
RFM Corp.	1.54	1.54	1.52	1.52	224,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	1,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47.5	47.5	47	47	21,600
San Miguel Corp. B	64	64	63	63	53,100
Universal Robina Corp.	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.9	10,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	70,000
Ayala Corp.	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.6	8,905,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	1,000,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.96	2	1.96	2	473,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	40,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	50,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	3	3	56,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10.25	10	10.25	13,700
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.79	0.79	0.78	0.78	1,950,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	210,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	70,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.105	0.1	0.105	140,000
Fil-Estate Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	10,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	10,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	55,700
Global Equities Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	20,000
Ionics Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9	37,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.88	1.88	30,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.88	720,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.61	0.65	0.61	0.65	110,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	1,360,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.92	1,040,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	130,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	50,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	60,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.53	0.53	0.52	0.53	2,950,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.56	0.56	30,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	20,000
Grand Plaza Hotel Corp.	11	11	11	11	10,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	34.5	34.5	34	34	87,500
DMCI Holdings Inc.-Pref.	775	775	770	770	1,850
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	790	790	790	790	500
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004	0.0004	5,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,400
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	5,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.8	6.8	7,605,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	50,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	700,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	2,840,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	1,980,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	30,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.34	2.36	2.32	2.32	1,148,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.37	0.38	0.37	0.38	190,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.5	17,498,000
Universal Rightfield Prop.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	1,000,000
MINING					
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't.	2	2	2	2	8,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.039	0.039	0.039	0.039	2,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.205	870,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	20,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0036	0.0038	0.0036	0.0038	22,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.019	0.019	0.019	0.019	1,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.004	4,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0044	0.0042	0.0044	21,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	1,000,000
South China Resources Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	50,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	300,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,600,180	121,969,205.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	60,135,260	177,242,150.00
PRO	33,041,000	170,452,740.00
Mining	44,878,000	425,350.00
OIL	27,350,000	194,600.00
GRAND TOTALS:	167,004,440	470,284,045.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	579.38	DOWN 0.21
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,917.09	DOWN 7.53
PRO	609.04	DOWN 4.35
Mining	1,313.45	UNCH 0.00
OIL	1.59	DOWN 0.04
All Shares Index	745.26	DOWN 13.11
Composite	1,407.13	DOWN 6.18

NO. OF ADVANCES: 17; NO. OF DECLINES: 38; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 46; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 101; NO. OF TRADES: 1,328

CURRENCIES

March 26, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.139341	1.000000	51.1360
Japan	Yen	0.008542	0.007497	0.3834
United Kingdom	Pound	1.625271	1.426500	72.9455
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.146081	0.128215	6.5564
Switzerland	Franc	0.684413	0.600709	30.7179
Canada	Dollar	0.719690	0.631672	32.3012
Singapore	Dollar	0.619713	0.543922	27.8140
Australia	Dollar	0.604425	0.530504	27.1279
Bahrain	Dinar	3.022287	2.652661	135.6465
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.303825	0.266667	13.6363
Brunei	Dollar	0.618031	0.542446	27.7385
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000117	0.000103	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.026277	0.023063	1.1793
UAE	Dirham	0.310211	0.272272	13.9229
Korea	Won	0.000862	0.000757	0.0387
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.877700	44.8821
Brazil	Real	0.482567	0.423549	21.6586
Denmark	Kroner	0.134523	0.118071	6.0377
India	Rupee	0.023400	0.020538	1.0502
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.299827	0.263158	13.4568
Mexico	New Peso	0.126505	0.111033	5.6778
New Zealand	Dollar	0.499492	0.438404	22.4182
Norway	Kroner	0.129640	0.113785	5.8185
Pakistan	Rupee	0.019133	0.016793	0.8587
South Africa	Rand	0.098783	0.086702	4.4336
Sweden	Kroner	0.110978	0.097405	4.9809
Syria	Pound	0.022123	0.019417	0.9929
Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.032590	0.028604	1.4627
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.001281	0.001124	0.0575

GSIS, SSS and other workers' crosses

LABOR MANAGEMENT FORUM

Josephus B. Jimenez

THE FILIPINO workers are being crucified not just on Good Friday but everyday, as they struggle to survive on their minimum wage and cope with their hard feelings brought about by wage deductions to fund government operations and institutions that hardly deliver meaningful benefits to the working masses.

These burdens unilaterally imposed on them are like crosses that the workingmen have to bear. These include regressive withholding taxes to be remitted to the BIR, onerous contributions and premiums to the SSS or GSIS, expensive dues to Philhealth and burdensome contributions to Pag-IBIG. These are on top of union dues, agency fees and special assessments imposed by labor organizations and federations.

Taxing the poor

Since our system of taxation is regressive, instead of progressive as it is mandated to be, we have a government that imposes heavy taxation on the poor and the middle class and allows the rich and the super rich various liberal modes of tax avoidance.

The poor workers who man the operating lines in our factories and manufacturing plants are burdened with a compulsory tax withholding scheme that not only disrupts their precarious cash flow but also robs them of money that could have provided them with basic foods, rentals for their dwellings, tuition for their children and medicines for their sick.

Office workers also complain about the big tax bites that reduce their take home pay and substantially diminish their purchasing power. Also, our jurisprudence dictates that when the employer firm becomes bankrupt, the tax due to the government enjoys preference to wages, retirement and separation pay owing to workers.

The sins of SSS

No matter how the fantastically paid PR wizards of the SSS would try to repaint the SSS with immaculate white, its image is beyond any form of whitewash. The social crimes it has committed against the workingmen are beyond remission. It has remained oblivious to the welfare of its members even as they keep on increasing contributions to finance a highly paid, desperately inefficient and anti-worker bureaucracy.

It has collected millions of pesos from workers and employees, invested them in banks, gambling firms and other extraneous and highly speculative ventures. And when most of such investments yield tremendous losses, the SSS bigwigs turn around to increase SSS dues, and recover from the workers the billions of pesos it lost elsewhere. Meanwhile, the SSS continue to deny workers' claims for disability, sickness and death benefits based on technicalities.

The cruelties of GSIS

While marginal government employees continue to suffer in poverty, GSIS top executives continue to live in style and extravagance as they allocated among themselves fantastic salaries, out-of-this-world bonuses and astronomical retirement packages. If you don't call it callousness, what is callousness?

A retired public school teacher's pension, which is hardly P5,000 is not only too little but its delivery is too late. Claims for sickness, disability and death benefits are often denied, or at best delayed. Orphans and widows of dead civil servants wait too long and often in vain. If we don't call this cruelty, what is cruelty?

Philhealth's pretensions

The romantic notion of medical care for all Filipinos, including the poor and unemployed, is precisely just that, a notion. It has no empirical basis in reality. Sick Filipinos, workers and non-working, continue to be denied decent medical care. Hospitals and doctors remain a luxury as they continue to drive away indigent patients form their doors.

While contributions to Philhealth are compulsory for all workers, not all hospitals and doctors are accredited. Thus, when the medical need arises, the patient has no access to the benefits for which he has already paid for via compulsory wage deductions. We are only raising the workers' expectation and are exacerbating in effect, the peoples' overall social discontent.

Pag-IBIG without love

The acronym Pag-IBIG should be abrogated because it is the biggest lie ever brandished before the faces of the much-hoodwinked Filipino workingmen. Where do you find a system where every employee is compelled to contribute but not everyone is qualified to avail himself of the system's benefits. Pag-IBIG is cruel in its foreclosures and unforgiving stance vis-a-vis loans that are not paid due to its members' untimely loss of jobs.

After those long years of Pag-IBIG impositions, millions of workers remain in the squatters' areas living like beasts under bridges and in shanties that practically diminish their human dignity. Meanwhile, Pag-IBIG executives ostentatiously display their government cars, often using them for private purposes, and travel abroad in luxury. They quarrel over turf and confuse the true and genuine issues involving their utter failure to do their duties to the people.

Abolish the weakest links

To save billions of pesos, Congress should consider abolishing white elephants like the SSS and the GSIS, and allow the private sector to take over the workers' insurance to be paid from the State Insurance Fund that either DOLE or DSWD should administer. If the GSIS and SSS top guns are really executive geniuses, let them manage their own businesses and invest their own money.

Let housing be handled by HUDC and health be in the hands of the DOH. Services should be free, taken from savings generated by abolishing the Countryside Development Fund.

Let us reform taxation and free the workers from these crosses. Let's stop crucifying the poor and start serving the people as Christ did.

(For comments, you can reach the writer at the following e-mail address: josephus.jimenez@pcppi.com.ph)

Cement . . .

From page B1

evidence of hoarding.

Philcemcor claimed that there should be no production shortfall since production capacity in these areas (524,000 bags a day) was well above the projected demand of 470,000 bags a day. Philcemcor members are shipping in one million bags of cement from the South to augment the shortage in Metro Manila, Regions 3 and 4.

Despite the cement shortage, Roxas remains supportive of Philcemcor's petition to slap punitive duties and import quotas on cement imports, which the Tariff Commission had rejected.

Peso seen to stabilize at 50-51.75

From page B1

dollar this year.

HSBC launched its Asian currency bond index yesterday, a tool that will guide foreign investors on the potential yields of Asian investments.

The bank, however, gave the peso its lowest weighting among Asian currencies at 1.14 percent compared to Thailand's 2.32 percent, Malaysia's 4.49 percent, Taiwan's 5.21 percent, Singapore's 14.08 percent, and Korea's 37.37 percent.

McGowan explained that the weighting was influenced by market capitalization, liquidity, accessibility and availability.

Most crucial to the Philippine weighting was the low turnover from October 2000 to 2001 when investors were waiting on the sidelines for developments that would determine the level of the peso.

The HSBC treasurer said the peso weighting would likely be adjusted by June and that it would likely be closer to that of Thailand by then.

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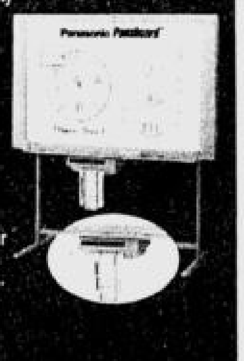

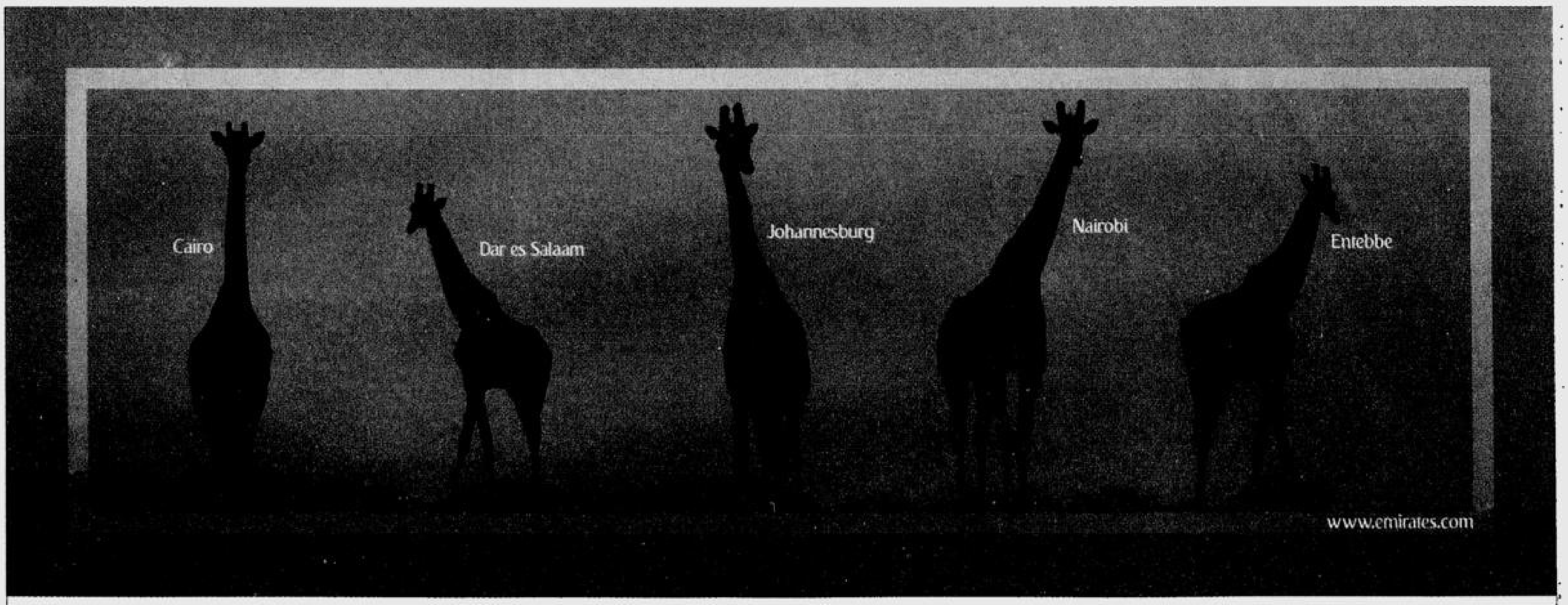

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People, Events & Products

Aries Espinosa, Editor

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Smart offers free calls, text for commuters

TO ASSIST provincial commuters during the Lenten season, wireless services leader Smart Communications Inc., in partnership with Victory Liner, Philtranco, and Negros Navigation, is offering free cellular-to-cellular calls and text messaging sending services via its Smartalk GSM payphones. The offer started March 26 and continues until today, March 27 only.

Smart booths will be located at the Victory Liner Cubao, Kamias and Kalookan stations and also at the Philtranco Pasay Terminal. For those boarding the Nenaco ship of Negros Navigation, a booth will be on site at Pier 2 at the North Harbor in Manila. A commuter can avail himself of either a one-minute cellphone call or one text message sending.

"Travelers during Holy Week will benefit most from our Smartalk Free Cell to Cell calls and Text Message Sending Service. Communication while on the road is important given the expected heavy traffic, as many people are going to the provinces. This is just one of Smart's way of giving public service," said Christina Z. Mariano, Smart public access head.

Smartalk GSM payphones are located not just in busy passenger terminals, but even aboard the buses and ships themselves. For those boarding Philippine Rabbit and Victory Liner buses, Smartalk GSM payphones are also installed inside selected buses.

Smart has also provided cellular phones for the use of the Department of Transportation and Communications in their public assistance program for the Holy Week.

WOMEN'S BALL AT SM MALLS

Event Visions Inc. brings together some of Metro Manila's shining hardcourt belles in a battle of basketball skills dubbed 'Hardcourt Misses: Women's Summer Basketball Series 2002' slated to open on April 6 at the SM City North Edsa Entertainment Center at 11 a.m. Elimination rounds will be held on April 13 at SM Manila and semi-finals on April 20 at SM Southmall. Games start at 10:30 a.m. The championship match will be on April 28, 2 p.m. at the SM Megamall Atrium A. Seeing action in the 4-on-4 are (from left, seated) Ruth Tolentino of the College of Holy Spirit, Therese Claudia Ablang of Miriam College, Jhoanna Caso of Lyceum, Jacqueline Jimenez of St. Benilde, Danica Regina Caynap of Ateneo, (standing, from left) Marielle Orbon of UE, Minerva Narciza of Adamson, Juvy Salazar of UST, Cheryl Conine of UP, and Cristina Madridano of FEU. For details, call Beng David at 807-7281, 809-6344 and 842-3305, or e-mail beng@eventivisions.com.ph.

'ARE YOU HOT ENOUGH?'

Such was the challenge Mama Sita's Labuyo Team posed to guests and customers at various bars and restaurants in Metro Manila recently. The Labuyo Tour product launch visited Apo Duwaling, Kampo, 8th Day, Friends, Ten Years After, Watering Hole, and Strumms where patrons got treated to a Dare contest, Labuyo Taste Test, and a raffle of Mama Sita's giveaways. Shown are contestants taking the Labuyo Challenge at Decades Bar-Tomas Morato with the Labuyo Babes, more popularly known as the Kendeng Girls of 'Magandang Tanghali Bayan'.

TOBY EXCLUSIVE DISTRIBUTOR

Toby's Sports, the country's leading sports and fitness store chain, was recently appointed by Feelfree of New Zealand as the exclusive Philippine distributor of Feelfree Kayaks. Under the agreement, Toby's will carry five different kayak models that include Nomad, Cosmic, Dolphin 2, Gemini and Tri-Yak. Apart from kayaks, Toby's will also carry other kayaking accessories from Feelfree such as paddles and canvass seats. Shown sealing the agreement are (from left) Toby's Sports president Jojo Claudio, operations manager Toby Claudio, Joy Sports director Sakun Khleowan and Feelfree international managing director Paul Lepper. For dealerships, call 671-9768 or 671-9769.

BONE, JOINT CARE DAY

Pharmaceutical company Merck Sharp & Dohme Philippines (MSD) brings education of bone and joint care health to the masses with a series of Bone and Joint Care Day programs conducted in cooperation with hospitals and medical centers nationwide. Shown is Dr. Stephen Cu giving a lecture on osteoarthritis to participants of a recent Bone and Joint Care Day held at the Healthway Clinic in Binondo. For more information on osteoarthritis and osteoporosis treatment, consult your doctor. For other concerns, call the MSD customer call center at 878-6338 or 1-800-1-888-6737 (outside Metro Manila).

Air passengers urged to arrive 3 hours early

DOMESTIC air carrier Asian Spirit airline is advising passengers booked during the Holy Week to come to the airport at least three hours before their scheduled flights to avoid any inconvenience.

Sales and marketing head Lingling Rodriguez said that this year would definitely be busier, especially with the recent Malacañang proclamation of non-working holidays during the Lenten season.

"A lot of people have taken advantage of this long Holy Week break, that's why we have added special flights just to accommodate them," Rodriguez revealed. "And since we fly mostly to tourist destinations like Boracay, Bohol, Marinduque, Palawan, and Baguio, to name a few, we expect a heavier than normal influx of passengers," she added.

Rodriguez also cautioned passengers on the ongoing construction at the domestic airport, which might cause some delay for passengers trying to catch their flights.

Passengers are also reminded that if they fail to check in at least 45 minutes before the scheduled flight, they tend to lose their confirmed seats to wait-listed passengers.

"During these extraordinary situations, it would be wise to plan your trip ahead, including pre-departure schedules if you want to ensure a hassle-free vacation," Rodriguez advised.

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HOTELEX 2002
SIGNING OF MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT
May 30 - June 1, 2002

10TH HOTELEX GETS SUPPORT FROM HRCAP

The Philippines' premier trade exhibit for the food and hospitality industry—Hotelex—is all set for its 10th edition from May 30 to June 1 at the World Trade Center Metro Manila. A cooperative agreement was recently signed between Hotelex 2002 organizers Worldexco and the Hotel and Restaurant Chefs Association of the Philippines (HRCAP). Shown is Worldexco president Lynn Romero (seated, second from left) with, third from left, HRCAP president Roberto Francisco (executive chef of the Grand Boulevard Hotel) and HRCAP vice president Pablo Logro (executive chef of the Diamond Hotel). Also shown, seated, is Ma'an Azurin, marketing manager for Worldexco, Raquel Romero (standing), special events manager of Worldexco, and Millet Menguito, corporate secretary of HRCAP.

Sun Life Financial extends program to March 31

SUN LIFE Financial Services of Canada Inc.'s extension of its global asset reunification program runs until March 31.

Originally scheduled to expire last Dec. 31, the program is designed to locate policyholders worldwide and assist them in claiming the shares and dividends or cash due to them as a result of the corporation's demutualization on March 22, 2000.

The Corporation has retained Toronto-based Georgeson Shareholder Communications Inc. and its international affiliates to manage the program. Individuals with questions regarding this program should call Georgeson Shareholder Communications Inc. in the Philippines at (02)438-0077, toll-free within the Philippines at 1-800-111-00-532, or visit www.gsccanada.com.

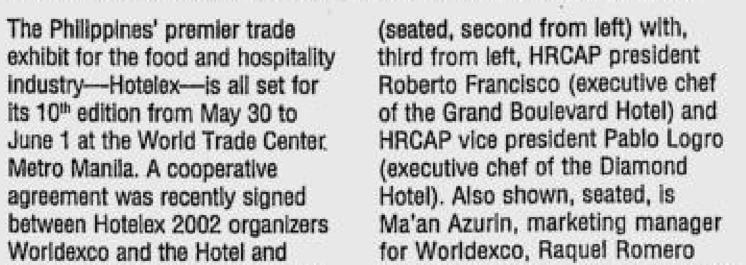
Sun Life Financial is a leading international financial services organization, providing a diverse range of wealth accumulation and protection products and services to individuals and corporate customers. As of Sept. 30, 2001, the Sun Life Financial group of companies has total assets under management of CDN$299 billion.

The message of lent in Jesuit story and song

NATIONAL PRID

PIZZA HUT WINS GOLD

The Pizza Hut Philippine team successfully defended its Asia-Pacific gold medal prize in the Pizza Hut Olympics Champs Challenge 2002, besting 18 countries. The Philippine team of Pizza Hut competed in the annual Champs Challenge 2002 held in Kota Kinabalu, East Malaysia. The annual competition is a major event participated in by delegates from Malaysia, Singapore, China, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, India, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, South Korea, Japan, Hawaii, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Brunei, Pakistan, and the United States. The competition focuses on delivering exceptional quality products and service at all times.



IIC OFFERS FOREIGN DEGREES

The newly opened Informatics International College (IIC) offers international foreign degrees from prestigious colleges and universities worldwide via its newly opened campus in Filinvest Alabang. Like Informatics Philippines, these universities have strong linkages with global industrial partners and a long-standing valuable partnership with other industry leaders and innovators who also aim to provide modern methodologies and flexibility in offering international degree courses. During the launch of Informatics International College last February, the memorandum of agreement was signed by (from left) Josephine Yap, EVP of Filinvest Alabang Inc., Andrew Gotianum, chair of Filinvest Development Corp., Leo Riingen, CEO and president of Informatics Phils., and Irene Roa, director for corporate operations.

Product FILES

KFC SALUTES THE FIREMEN

KFC JOINS the entire metropolis in observing the Fire Prevention Month with Chuckie, KFC's mascot playing fireman-with-all-the-right-moves in KFC's four action toys: Flame Buster, Elevated Rescue, Flip Flop, and Climb Climb. Collect all four when you buy the Fire Drill Chuckie Meals, a choice of BBQ Chicken Burger, Spaghetti, Chicken, and the newest addition Chicken Strips Meal. Remember, a different toy will be available for each week of March so start collecting these colorful toys.

The Fire Chuckie Meal toys are available until March 31 at all KFC branches nationwide.

MODESS KEEPS UP WITH YOU

MODESS, the leading name in sanitary protection, recognizes the fact that more and more women are now taking action. For sure, you're one of them. That's why it introduces New Modess Maxi, a breakthrough pad designed to answer your need for active leak protection.

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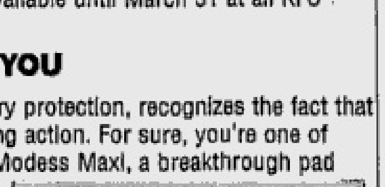

BITS & Clips

Receive Christ's healing power

JOIN the 3-day Lenten retreat with Fr. Archie C. Guiriba, OFM on March 28, 29 and 30, 4 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum. The retreat is hosted by the Shalom International Catholic Charismatic Foundation Inc., at 69 San Pedro Bautista Street, SFDM, Quezon City. For inquiries, call 373-2976, or at telefax 373-2977.

CCP hosts YDS survival training

THE CENTRAL Colleges of the Philippines hosts the survival training for the trainors of this year's Youth Day Summit. This event is being held in Dalisay Village in Boracay until March 31. The YDS is an annual event that congregates 1,000 select students from different schools for leadership training and youth development, as well as survival training skills. The event officially kicks off this April 11 at the CCP school grounds. The Maritime Industries Authority will sponsor the Trainer's Survival Training's transportation requirements aboard the MV Virgin Mary. The Philippine Mental Health Association will also sponsor and take part in the event from May 2 to 4. For inquiries, call the YDS office at 715-3777.

World forum for educators

CONCEP INC., as the local partner of Child Care Information Exchange founder and prime mover of World Forum for Early Care and Education, invites all pre-school owners, administrators, and stakeholders to join an international gathering of early childhood leaders from April 9 to 12 at the Sky City located in the heart of Auckland, New Zealand's business district. The World Forum for Early Childhood Education aims to promote an ongoing global exchange of ideas on the delivery of quality services in diverse settings. For further information, interested participants can call 823-7875 or 823-9226. Deadline for application is on March 31.

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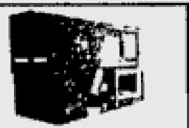

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at CENTRAL LUZON STATE UNIVERSITY

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Philippine Carabao Center invites interested suppliers to pre-qualify and to bid for the supply and delivery of:

1 unit Generating Set 50 KVA
1 unit L-200 DT (Dual Tractor)
Construction Materials
Supply of Labor & Materials/Equipment for repair of cold room
Molder & tools for manufacturing milk plastic container

Pre-qualification requirements can be secured from Mr. Ronaldo A. Sadural Property section, Philippine Carabao Center National Gene Pool and Headquarters CLSU Compound, Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija and Eustaquio C. Pagaduan, Philippine Carabao Center at CLSU Office located at Central Luzon State University, Science City of Muñoz, starting **April 1, 2002.** Last day of submission of pre-qualification documents will be on **April 5, 2002.**

Only those who submitted pre-qualification documents are allowed to attend the pre-bidding conference on **April 12, 2002,** 10:00 a.m. at the Philippine Carabao Center National Gene Pool and Headquarters Office. those who failed to attend the pre-bidding conference are disqualified to participate in the bidding.

Sealed bids shall be received by the PCC Headquarters not later than **April 19, 2002,** 10:00 a.m. at the same address. Only pre-qualified bidders will be allowed to attend the bidding proper.

The Philippine Carabao Center reserves the right to reject any of all bids, waive any formality in such bids, and to accept bids as may be considered most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **FELOMINO V. MAMUAD**
Center Director

(PDI - March 15, 18 & 27, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
Board of Investments
Philippine Retirement Authority
29/F Citibank Tower 874, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND BID

The Philippine Retirement Authority (PRA) invites interested firms to apply for prequalification and if found eligible, to bid for separate services, as follows:

1. Conduct of Financial and Performance Audit of PRA from 1987 to 2001: (PRA-02-01)
2. Development of a PRA Five (5) Years Master Marketing Plan: (PRA-02-01)

This invitation is open to Marketing Firms or Auditing Firms which have proven track records for the past three (3) years in the delivery of such services. Marketing firms, specifically, should have such experience in the development of marketing plans of travel, visa or related service agencies.

Pre-qualification forms may be secured from the Pre-qualifications, Evaluation and Awards Committee (PEAC) starting **Monday, April 15, 2002,** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100.00. These forms, including eligibility documents, shall be submitted to the PEAC not later than 5:00 p.m. on **Friday, April 19, 2002.**

To clarify issues, pre-bidding conference shall be held at the above address from 2:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. on **Tuesdays, April 23, 2002** and on **April 30, 2002** for PRA-02-01 and PRA 02-02, respectively.

(Sgd.) **ERLINA P. LOZADA**
Chairman, Pre-Qualifications, Evaluation & Awards Committee

(PDI--Mar. 27 & April 3, 2002)

INQUIRER TRIVIA
By BONG BARRAMEDA

Sign of the Cross

Since as early as the 9th century the sign of the cross as a sacred gesture has been an integral part of religious services. The Western or Latin benediction is made outwardly with the extended thumb, index and middle fingers. This formation, called the *Mano Panten,* symbolizes the Trinity. The forehead cross was initially a secret sign by which Christians identified themselves to each other during times of persecution. Today, Roman Catholics and some Anglicans make the sign during prayers in two ways: as the "Great Sign" with five fingers--representing Christ's five wounds--on the forehead, breast, and from the left shoulder across to the right; or at the beginning of the Gospel at Mass as the "Lesser Sign," with only the thumb on the forehead, the lips, and the breast or heart. Easter Christians trace the sign of the cross on the forehead, stomach and from right shoulder to left with the thumb, forefinger and middle finger, which again is symbolic of the Holy Trinity.

For the Record. Since early Christians forbade the use of images to allow any representation of the Crucifixion, no pictorial record exists indicating the actual shape of the cross used to crucify Jesus. The Bible mentions the cross of Christ only once (Matthew 27:37), but no inference regarding its shape can be made from this reference.

Classified Odd. The son of a rich Italian merchant, St. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226), refused his inheritance to spend his life serving the poor. In 1224, he received the stigmata, bleeding from those places on his body were Christ had suffered his five sacred wounds. St. Francis loved the birds and all living creatures, insects among them. When someone caught a fish, he would throw it back into the water. When he walked, he would remove worms from his path. In winter, St. Francis served honey and wine to wild beasts. Although he allowed trees to be trimmed, he would not allow one to be cut down. He was, however, not a vegetarian.

WORD WATCH

Veterinarian (vet'uhr ih ner'ee uhn): from the Latin *veterina,* "beasts of burden."

PDI -- March 27, 2002

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Mario Nieto Y Sanchez had been extrajudicially settled among his surviving heirs per Doc. No. 338; Page No. 68; Book No. I Series of 2002 by Maria Obdulia Vitug-Palanca Notary Public
(PDI-March 13,20&27, 2002)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN the ESTATE of the late VICTOR RUIZ AGUILAR was settled EXTRA-JUDICIALLY with waiver of rights as per Doc.No. 195 Page No. 39 Book No. III series of 2002 before Notary Public
ATTY. PERFECTO SOTORIDONA
March 20, 27 & April 3, 2002

PUBLIC NOTICES

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO THE HOLY SPIRIT
Holy Spirit thou who make me see everything and show me the way to reach my ideal. You who give me the divine gift to forgive and forget the wrong that is done to me and who are in all instances of my life with me. I, in this short dialogue, want to thank You for everything and confirm once more that I never want to be separated from You, no matter how great the material desires may be. I want to be with You and my loved ones in Your Perpetual Glory. Amen.

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD
OLD MIA ROAD, PASAY CITY
METRO MANILA

IN RE: APPLICATION FOR AUTHORITY TO OPERATE AS AN INTERNATIONAL AIRFREIGHT FORWARDER

AMCO CARGO SYSTEMS, INC.,
Applicant,

CAB CASE NO. 21352

x--x

NOTICE OF HEARING

Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 776, as amended, notice is hereby given that **AMCO CARGO SYSTEMS, INC.** has filed an application before the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) for an Authority to Operate as an International Airfreight Forwarder. The initial hearing of the above-entitled case will be held on **11 April 2002 at 10:00 AM** at the Conference Room of the CAB, Old MIA Road, Pasay City before the undersigned Hearing Officer, at which hearing, the applicant shall present its evidence.

The applicant is hereby required to have this Notice of Hearing published once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation, or that copies thereof and the application be sent to existing CAB certified airfreight forwarders either by personal service or with a registered mail with return card at least three (3) days before the scheduled hearing.

Parties opposed to the granting of the application must file their written opposition on or before the date of the hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the applicant and appear at the hearing with such evidence as may be proper in the premises. Failure on the part of any interested party to file its opposition on time and appear at the hearing will be construed as a waiver of its right to be heard and the Civil Aeronautics Board will proceed to hear and decide this application on its merits.

Let a copy of the Application and this Notice be posted at the CAB Bulletin Board beginning today.

21 March 2002
Pasay City, Philippines.

(Sgd.) **MANUEL A. MORENTE, JR.**
Chief, Legal & Enforcement Division

(PDI – Mar. 27 & Apr. 3, 2002)

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I S A P, Incorporated
(Insurance & Surety Association of the Philippines)
Makati City

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Insurance and Surety Association of the Philippines, Inc. or ISAP, Inc., the umbrella organization of all licensed non-life insurance companies in the Philippines, hereby invites all interested IT Service Providers to pre-qualify for the bidding and to bid for the development of the:

ISAP AUTHENTICATION SYSTEM

for the Compulsory Third Party Liability Insurance (CTPL) Certificates of Cover (COCs) required under the Insurance Code prior to registration of all motor vehicles with the Land Transportation Office (LTO).

The following pre-qualification requirements in two copies must be submitted to the ISAP office, Sixth Floor, Champaca II Building, 162 L.P. Leviste Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City, on or before April 5, 2002, to form the basis for evaluation and assessment for pre-qualification of bidders:

1. SEC Registration Papers.
2. 2002 Business License/Permit.
3. Income Tax Return for the last two (2) years (2000-2001) marked received by the BIR with the accompanying Audited Financial Statements attached.
4. Company Profile.
5. List of clients and references, and supporting documents.

Pre-bidding conference and bidding schedules shall be announced to all pre-qualified bidders. Those who fail to attend the pre-bidding conference are disqualified to participate in the bidding.

ISAP, Inc. reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality or defect therein, and to accept such bids as may be considered most advantageous to ISAP, Inc.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. VICTORIA ROMAN FLORES**
President

(PDI – Mar. 27, 2002)

Republic of the Philippines
SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. (632) 920-6401 • (632) 920-6446
Email: sssemail@info.com.ph • Web site http://www.sss.gov.ph

NOTICE

Please get in touch with the Members Assistance Center, Social Security System (SSS), East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or at any SSS Office nearest your place of residence and file your death benefit claim within 90 days upon publication, if you are:

NAME OF BENEFICIARIES	LAST KNOWN ADDRESS	NAME OF SSS MEMBERS	DATE OF DEMISE
1) Corazon Abonador	Unknown	Julio Abonador SS# 07-0095988-8	November 19, 1998
2) Milagros S. Banawa	Unknown	Rogelio M. Banawa SS# 09-0462852-0	November 19, 2001
3) Rey Areglado	Bisita Binakayan, Kawit, Cavite	Teresita V. Bentulan SS# 03-9589928-5	October 1, 2001
Virgilio Omega	Campokpok, Tabango, Leyte		
4) Prudencia Ranza	Tabon, Bislig, Surigao del Sur	Nicomedes C. Bernales SS# 08-0178326-7	October 8, 2001
5) Antonina L. Cablinda Nimfa, Ronilo & Rodrigo Cablinda	Bit-os, Butuan City	Guillermo D. Cablinda SS# 03-1162157-6	September 3, 2001
6) Adelaida B. Cortez	15-B San Rafael St., Iloilo City	Lamberto Cortez SS# 03-0539838-1	February 15, 2001
7) Constancia J. Dumayag	Unknown	Henry Dumayag SS# 03-1188899-5	March 3, 2001
8) Mely T. Franco	Unknown	Rolando D. Franco SS# 01-0741215-1	February 8, 2002
9) Agnes Agustin	Unknown	Renato Gabriel SS# 03-3330034-1	November 2, 2001
10) Apolinar G. Lusdoc	#15 32 Letre S.M., Malabon	Carla Gorduiz Galdo SS# 33-1737250-9	November 24, 1994
11) Wendelina	155 Garcia Hts., Davao City	Alfredo M. Lauzon SS# 09-0673138-9	December 4, 2001
12) Samisa Macatangcal	Mindanao	Abdullah Macatangcal SS# 33-3336075-7	September 29, 2000
13) Lilia Panoga Magdoza	Naval, Biliran, Leyte	Carlito L. Magdoza SS# 09-1001745-5	July 23, 1995
14) Estrella A. Maligao, Merefie, Elmar & Meraflor Maligao	San Roque, Malita, Davao Del Sur	Marcos C. Maligao SS# 09-1274685-0	August 23, 2001
15) Francisca Leonila, Leonila, Marolo, Ruben, Mamerto & Della	Ili-Ilihon Salay, Misamis, Oriental	Metrano Marianas SS# 08-0290834-2	June 11, 1997
16) Purificacion	España Ext., Quezon City	Pablo Mendoza SS# 04-0009940-4	October 5, 2001
17) Carolina Asa	Unknown	Eddie M. Oliva SS# 05-0221226-3	January 27, 2002
18) Jenneth Benbing	Cartilla, Sorsogon	Gonzalo G. Oliva SS# 33-3581321-5	February 17, 2001
19) Milagros	Unknown	Hermenegildo Pantin SS# 03-0405860-6	January 5, 2002
20) Josephine Datu	Sinafal, Solano, Nueva Vizcaya	Samson Paraiso SS# 01-0243027-7	April 16, 1960
21) Candilaria Dapidran	Bagong Silang, Kalookan	Benedicto C. Rabina SS# 03-2780891-4	October 13, 1998
22) Evelyn Liwag Welmin Ramos	Unknown	Rolando Ramos SS# 03-2278673-0	February 20, 2001
23) Rolando Rellepa	Himamaylan, Negros Occidental	Raymundo Rellepa SS# 07-1449577-8	October 15, 1999
24) Lolita Patalinghug Paulina Patalinghug	Sibonga, Cebu	Emeterio Sacis SS# 08-0163637-2	September 2, 2001
25) Esperanza E. Saluta Maria Luz Saluta	Unknown Bulanao, Libertad, Antique	Antonio M. Saluta SS# 07-0285113-3	March 6, 1999
26) Anita Samson	69 Lantana St., Cubao, Quezon City	Alberto A. Samson SS# 03-4291481-2	June 12, 2001
27) Minda/Melinda Sanopal	Unknown	Luis Sanopal SS# 07-0406679-3	October 10, 1995
28) Exequiel Santos	Unknown	Nenita A. Santos SS# 03-1574613-0	April 6, 2001
29) Elizabeth Jose	Tebag, Sta. Barbara, Pangasinan	Rolando B. Tawatao Sr. SS# 03-3325852-9	December 21, 2001
30) Anita Esguerra	Los Baños	Carlos Teves SS# 03-2408080-3	August 18, 2001

- NOTHING FOLLOWS -

(PDI - March 27, 2002)

PNOC COAL CORPORATION
Building 2, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone Nos. 893-1320/893-6001 local 2208 & 4332
Telefax No. (632) 893-0232

INVITATION TO BID

The PNOC Coal Corporation (PCC) invites accredited contractors to submit sealed bids for the:

CONSTRUCTION OF DRIER SYSTEM
(CN 02-001)

Bid documents may be secured from the Administrative Department (c/o Ms. Gilda F. Capistrano/Mr. George N. Alejandro) starting March 25, 2002 upon payment of a non-refundable fee of PESOS: Five Hundred (P500.00).

Sealed bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the Administrative Department not later than **2:00 o'clock P.M. of May 7, 2002 and then publicly opened at 2:30 P.M.** of the same date at the above address.

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **April 17, 2002, 2:00 P.M. at the PNOC-CC Conference Room, Bldg. 2, Ft. Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila**.

PCC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, or to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder/s whose bid/s is/are considered most advantageous to PCC.

(Sgd.) **Cristina B. Berin**
Chairperson
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--March 20 & 27, 2002)

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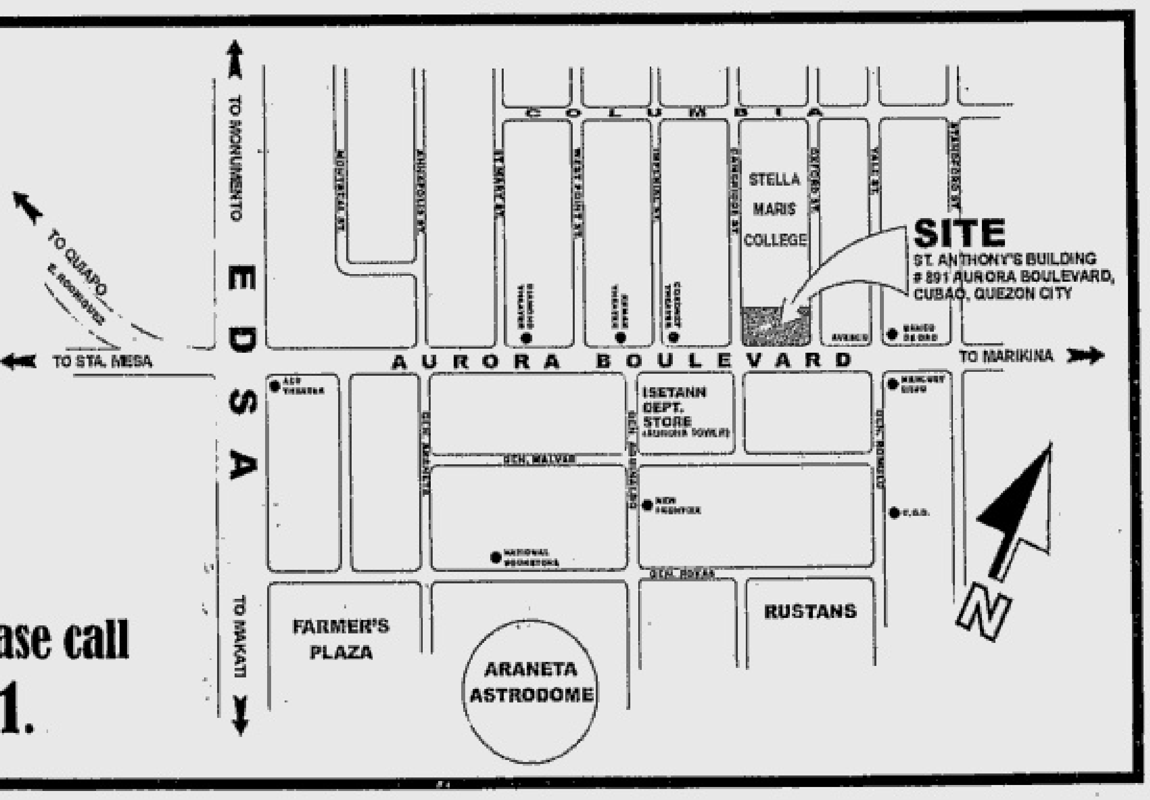

OBITUARIES

"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live, even though he dies; and whoever believes in Me will never die."
John 11:25-26

Mabini O. Velasco

Peacefully joined his Creator on Sunday, March 24 at the age of 88.

Her loving children **Eloisa** and **Bernie**; grandchildren **Vivian** and **Richard**, **Chris** and **Marlon**, **Maret**, **Elwin**, **Jobo**; great grandchildren **Geline**, **Yonyon**, **Cesca**, **Bea**; brothers and sisters **Salud**, **Florante**, **Aurea** and **Angel**; nephews, nieces, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at #155 J. Rizal Street, Silang, Cavite.

Interment will be on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2002 at the Himlayang Paraiso, Silang, Cavite after the 2:00 p.m. Holy Mass at Nuestra Señora de Candelaria Parish Church.

In Loving Memory
on the First Death Anniversary of

ILDEFONSO L. ESPINO

of Plaridel, Bulacan
San Pedro, Laguna
Daet, Camarines Norte

Who died in the Grace of our Lord on March 28, 2001.

We, his family, relatives and friends request those who knew him in life and pious readers to pray for his unending happiness with our Lord.

HOLY MASSES WILL BE OFFERED TODAY, WEDNESDAY MARCH 27, 2002.

1. St. James Parish, Plaridel Bulacan .... 6:00 am
   5:00 pm
2. San Pedro Apostol Parish, San Pedro, Laguna .... 6:00 am
   5:00 pm
3. St. John the Baptist, Daet, Camarines Norte .... 6:00 am
   5:00 pm
4. Holy Trinity Cathedral Daet, Camarines Norte .... 9:00 am
   5:00 pm
5. Pope Pius X Villazar Sipocot, Camarines Sur .... 5:00 pm
6. St. John the Baptist, Sipocot, Camarines Sur .... 5:00 pm

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Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.
Matthew 10:39

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The Stockholders, Board of Directors,
Trading Participants, Officers and Staff of the

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE, INC.

Announces with deep sorrow the passing away of
our beloved Chairman Emeritus

EDUARDO C. LIM

Who peacefully joined his Creator on March 25, 2002
at the age of 71.

His remains will lie in state at the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament
La Salle Greenhills, San Juan
until the 10:30 AM Mass on Maundy Thursday.

There will be a Requiem Mass at 2:00 PM on Easter Sunday
at the San Beda College Church, Mendiola Street, Manila.

Interment at the Family Mausoleum in Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina
will immediately follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the
EDUARDO C. LIM FOUNDATION FOR PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS
will be appreciated.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."
Matthew 10:39

GENOVEVA CASTRO FELICIANO

Died in the Grace of our Lord
on March 25, 2002 at the age of 88.

Her bereaved husband **Felipe**; children **Caridad, Aurora & Angelito (†), Romeo & Carlota, Rolando, Corazon & Ramon**; grandchildren and great grandchildren request prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at their residence in Poblacion, Bustos, Bulacan.

Interment will be at Bustos Memorial Park after the 11:00 a.m. Mass on March 31, 2002.

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The Chairman Emeritus for Life, **Romeo S. Villonco**, together with:
Chairman, **Dr. Daniel Vazquez**; Vice Chairman, **Roberto Montelibano**;
President, **Atty. Francisco P. Candelaria**; Vice President, **Miss Catalina Blanco**;
Treasurer, **Virginia Zamora**; Corporate Secretary, **Atty. Teodoro U. Benedicto**;
other directors **Lauro G. Marquez**, **Jacquelou Blanco-Dabao**, **Rodolfo Montelibano** and
Joseph Assad; and General Counsel, **Atty. Romeo G. Roxas**, of Republic Real Estate Corporation

wishes to announce with deep sorrow the demise of the corporate co-founder

Harry S. Stonehill

at the age of 84 at the Clinico, University of Malaga, Spain, on March 20, 2002.

Lourdes Blanco Stonehill, **Pauline D. Stonehill** and surviving children **Elizabeth S. Levy**, **Michael Joseph Stonehill**, **Harry Steven Stonehill Jr.**, **Katherine Stonehill**, **Susan Stonehill**, other children, grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

He is remembered for his humble contribution to the development of national economy particularly the introduction of local Virginia tobacco in Ilocos Region about half a century ago and since then millions of families in the North have mostly depended on said industry.

He pioneered in various industries, co-founded and/or served as officer or director of:

(a) U.S. Tobacco Corporation, the only American cigarette manufacturing company which was the largest taxpayer of the country for almost 10 years since 1958 with a complement of more than 5,000 workers & employees;
(b) Republic Real Estate Corporation which reclaimed a portion of Manila Bay to build a Bay City;
(c) Philippine Tobacco Flue Curing & Redrying Corporation, the first and largest outfit to service the Virginia Tobacco industry of Ilocos Region and cigarette manufacturing companies;
(d) Republic Glass Corporation, the first glass sheet manufacturing company in the country;
(e) Manila Memorial Park, the first of its kind in the Philippines;
(f) General Agricultural Corporation, established cotton industry in Dadiangas now General Santos City to reduce cotton importation;
(g) United Housing Corporation, the first leading low-cost housing, American Asiatic Oil Corp., Atlas Cement Corporation, Far East Publishing Corporation, publisher of former Evening News and dozens of other business firms.

"O Lord, you have made us very small, and we bring over years
to an end like a tale that is told; help us to remember that beyond
our brief day is the eternity of your love."

BELSON Group of Companies

Announces with deep sorrow
the passing of our beloved Founder

EDUARDO C. LIM

Who peacefully joined his Creator on March 25, 2002
at the age of 71.

His remains will lie in state at the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament
La Salle Greenhills, San Juan
until the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Maundy Thursday.

There will be a Mass at 2:00 p.m. on Easter Sunday
at the San Beda College Church, Mendiola Street, Manila.

Interment at the Family Mausoleum in Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina
will immediately follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the
EDUARDO C. LIM FOUNDATION FOR PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS
will be appreciated.

Sugi Management Corporation
Evergreen Cuisine Management Corporation

Announces with deep sorrow
the passing of our beloved Director and Treasurer

EDUARDO C. LIM

Who peacefully joined his Creator on March 25, 2002
at the age of 71.

His remains will lie in state at the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament
La Salle Greenhills, San Juan
until the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Maundy Thursday.

There will be a Mass at 2:00 p.m. on Easter Sunday
at the San Beda College Church, Mendiola Street, Manila.

Interment at the Family Mausoleum in Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina
will immediately follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the
EDUARDO C. LIM FOUNDATION FOR PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS
will be appreciated.

EDUARDO "EDDIE" C. LIM

Peacefully joined his Creator and Mama Mary on March 25, 2002 at the age of 71.

His Loving Family

Wife **Luisa Ontengco**

Children by his first wife **Annie Gonzales**†; **Moony, Elo** & **Butch Campos**; **Enrique**† & **Annette, Bing Bing** & **Pipo Liboro**; **Emmanuel** & **Leila**, and **Ernesto** & **Tet**

Parents **Benito**† & **Leoncia Lim**

Brothers and Sisters **Lulu** & **Johnny Lee**, **Tony**†, **Rene** & **Nanette**; **Carmen, Eric** & **Butch**, **Charrie**, and **Flory** & **Dennis Anglin**

Grandchildren **John, James** & **Arianne**; **Annelle** & **Butchito Campos**; **Elise, Elaine** & **Erica**; **Maxie, Billie, Benny** & **Sugar Liboro**; **Annie, Andrea** & **Pauline**; and **Joanna, Miggy** & **Jaime**

Stepchildren **Lindy**, **Jun-Jun** & **Liza Lopez**

His remains will lie in state at the Chapel of the Blessed Sacrament La Salle Greenhills, San Juan until the 10:30 a.m. Mass on Maundy Thursday. There will be a Mass at 2:00 p.m. on Easter Sunday to be held at the San Beda College Church, Mendiola Street, Manila. Interment at the family Mausoleum in Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina will immediately follow.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the EDUARDO C. LIM FOUNDATION FOR PROSTATE CANCER AWARENESS will be appreciated.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

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1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila; Tels. 522-8846; 522-9438; 400-5394

Remedios Lopez Angeles

of Naic, Cavite

Peacefully joined her Creator on March 23, 2002 at the age of 84.

Her husband **Roberto**
  children **Martha, Angelito** and **Marilyn**
  and grandchildren **Marietta, Mylenne** and **Angelito, Jr.**

Her brothers, sisters, nephews, nieces and grandchildren
  Saturno (†) and **Maria Ramirez**
  Cyrus and **Marilou**, **Camil** and **Dra. Biloy**,
  Manuel and **Vicky**, **Phillip** and **Cecille**,
  Pepe and **Florian**, **Ching** and **Fe**, **Ricky** and **Helen**,
  Angelo (†)
Dr. Jose and **Dra. Milagros Lopez**
  Dr. Johnny and **Dra. Mavi**, **Dra. Tina**, **Jerry** and **Denise**,
  Dr. Gary, **Dr. Bob** and **Dra. Melinda**
Justita Lopez
Amado and **Aida Lopez**
  Jaime and **Dra. Marissa**
Dra. Epifania Lopez (†)
Dra. Matea Lopez
Dr. Gregorio (†) and **Dra. Rustica Moral**
  Dr. Patrick, **Dr. Allen** and **Dra. Mayette**, **Paolo** and **Joseph**
Atty. Rosario Lopez (former SEC and PCSO Chairman)
Rosie Lopez

Enjoin the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul. Her remains lie in state at the Social Hall of the Santuario de San Jose Parish, East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City until March 30, 2002.

She will be transferred to the Multipurpose Hall of the Shrine of the Immaculate Concepcion, Naic, Cavite at 8:00 AM on Saturday, March 30, 2002.

Interment will be on March 31, 2002 at the Naic Catholic Cemetery after the celebration of the Holy Eucharist at the Immaculate Concepcion Shrine in Naic, Cavite at 2:00 PM..

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

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PEOPLE*at*WORK

Editor Raul O. Marcelo ◎ Subsection Editor Regina Galang Reyes

A TAIPAN'S MESSAGE OF HOPE

'I chose to live my life unafraid even during times when I was afraid'

By John Gokongwei, Jr.

(THE FOLLOWING is the second part of John Gokongwei's speech given last March 1, 2002 at the unveiling of the marker for the John Gokongwei School of Management Building of the Ateneo de Manila University. In the first part, Mr. Gokongwei shared his life story from the age of 13 as a student in San Carlos University in Cebu when his father died up to age 30 when he founded Universal Corn Products, the predecessor of Universal Robina Corporation.)

POSTCARDS *from the* CORPORATE EDGE

SO, we put up CFC and our first successful product was Blend 45, an instant coffee we put out to directly compete with Nestle's Nescafe. We positioned it as "the poor man's coffee," hired top movie star Susan Roces to endorse it, and employed Procter and Gamble veterans to sell it. Basically, we took a page out of the multinational book and applied it to our business. We gave our coffee, snack food, candy, and chocolates a name, a face, an image. Today, Jack and Jill, Max candy and Cloud 9 have become household names.

It was also at this time that I returned to school for an MBA—with all due respect to the Jesuits—at De La Salle University and a decade later for a 14-week advanced management program at Harvard. Going back to the university for studies which war had interrupted gave me an appreciation, believe me, for the beauty and the breadth of business life. This is something I believe I would never have gained if I had chosen to stop my education.

The success of URC opened up many opportunities for our group. We had the choice to focus on food where we were very successful or to pursue other businesses. We decided that there were too many good opportunities to pass up and that remaining in our comfort zone would stunt our growth. So we got into the AGE OF EXPANSION.

Pursuing businesses

For the next two decades, we pursued businesses that answered positive on four crucial questions. First: Is there a market? Second: Could we compete against both local and foreign players? Third: Could we find the right people for the job and did we have enough capital to pursue the business? Last and most important: Did we have the stomach for it? That is, could we take the sleepless nights, the cutthroat competition?

We went into textiles, retail, real estate, telecommunications, aviation, banking, and petrochemicals because we said "yes" to all those questions. Still, in all those industries, we were faced with tough and worthy competitors—the mighty SM Department Stores and Malls, the unbeatable PLDT, the entrenched Philippine Airlines and the powerful San Miguel Corporation.

Most pundits expected us to fail. They were wrong. Robinsons Stores and Mall, Digitel, Cebu Pacific Air and Universal Robina Corporation are now market leaders in their respective fields.

That's because they offered the public a choice.

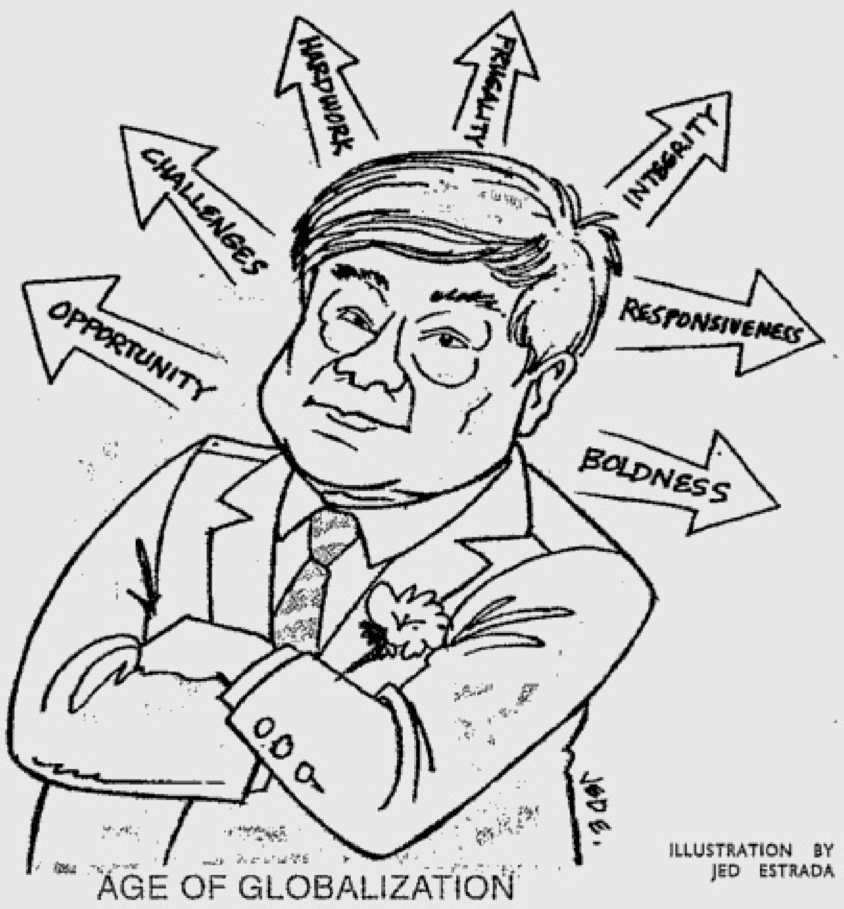
Remember the story of David and Goliath? Every industry has its Goliath.

But every David knows that all giants have their weaknesses. Every weakness is an opportunity.

In a few months, we will launch our mobile services to compete with two giants, Globe and Smart. Our stomachs are churning for sure—but we know that we faced similar challenges before, and we are hopeful we can prove the pundits wrong again.

In the past decade, which is one-sixth of my entire business life, the company has tripled in size. This was the decade when our companies raised money from the global equity and debt markets, brought our companies public, and hired the best professionals to run them. In six decades, we grew from a one-man team to a group with 30,000 employees.

> 'Success is not necessarily about connections or cutting corners or *chamba*—the three Cs of bad business'



AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

ILLUSTRATION BY JED ESTRADA

Globalization

Now I am in what you can probably call the AGE of GLOBALIZATION. I am always asked where I stand on this issue. I say that it does not matter where I stand because as sure as the Ateneo Basketball Team will win next year's UAAP championship, global barriers will come crashing down and we have no choice but to prepare ourselves for that.

Still our company will not take globalization sitting down—our future and the country's depend on how we act now. JG operates branded food concerns in Malaysia, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, Hongkong, China, and soon, Vietnam. We also sell our snack foods in India, Korea, and Taiwan—one of the few ASEAN companies to do so.

In a few years, when foreign products find their way into our shopping carts as they already have, we want Piattos and Chippy to find their way into their shopping carts as well. Our dream is to be the first group to plant the Philippine flag throughout Asia.

As I look back, I ask myself, "What if I had stopped at cornstarch?" I would probably be the owner of the biggest cornstarch group in the country today or just as possibly, be broke.

But I chose to live my life unafraid even during times when I was afraid. I discovered that opportunities don't find you. You find your opportunities. I found those opportunities when my father passed away, when war came, through changes in presidents and their policies, during martial law, despite the *coup de etats*, past economic booms and busts, and in the midst of market shifts and movements.

Boldness to dream

Now I 'm 75 and retired. And funny, but I often wonder what ever happened to my first bike! The bike that was my companion during those first years when my family had lost everything. I wonder where it is now? That bike reminds me that success is not necessarily about connections, or cutting corners, or *chamba*—the three Cs of bad business.

Call it trite-but, believe me, success can be achieved through hard work, frugality, integrity, responsiveness to change—and most of all, boldness to dream. These have never been just easy slogans for me. I have lived by them.

I hope that many of you in this room will some day choose to be entrepreneurs. Choose to be an entrepreneur because then you create value. Choose to be an entrepreneur because the products, services and jobs you create then become the lifeblood of our nation. But most of all, choose to be an entrepreneur because then you desire a life of adventure, endless challenge, and the opportunity to be your best self.

(Send feedback to rreyes@inquirer.com.ph.*)*

Take positive steps for successful collaboration

By Josie O. Santamaria

(This is the third and final part of "How to transform office wars into company triumphs.)

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

THERE are steps required in making collaboration work. These steps are an adaptation of Dr. Stephen Covey's win-win paradigm as described in the book, "Seven Basic Habits of Highly Effective People." These steps are:

Step 1. When confronted by an angry and hostile person, stop and take a deep breath. Drink water, if available. Face the angry protagonist and look him in the eye. Establish eye contact but do not stare at him.

Step 2. Listen with empathy. What is the real message of the other person? Look beyond the words of the angry protagonist. What does he feel? What are his needs and wants? Give an empathic response i.e., reflect back to the person what his feelings are and paraphrase what he said.

Empathy

An example of an empathic response is: "You are disappointed that I disapproved your proposal for an out-of-town seminar after you thought you had me convinced. Am I right?" Then, wait for him to react to your empathic response. The mistake we make is when we deny or reject the feelings of the other person, as when we say, "You should not be disappointed" or "Why should you feel disappointed?" You have to see the situation from the viewpoint of the other person and acknowledge his feelings and his needs. This does not mean that you are agreeing with him. Once the person feels understood because you have acknowledge his feelings and that you have accurately paraphrased what he said, then, you can now go to the next step.

Step 3. Ask the other person: "Let's identify our differences and our respective wants and needs behind our strong views. Are you willing to do this?" When the other person agrees to do this, begin to write down on a whiteboard or Manila paper what he wants and why in Column A. In Column B, write down what you want and why. Keep doing this until both of you have expressed your real needs and wants.

Step 4. Ask the other person. "Let's now identify our commonalities or areas for agreements. Are you willing to do this?" If the answer is yes, both of you now list down the areas where you agree on.

Step 5. Agree now on the superordinate goal i.e., what is it that both of you are trying to achieve? Marketing wants to increase market share while Finance wants to control costs. The superordinate goal is that both want the company to be profitable and to grow.

Step 6. Brainstorm on ways to resolve the conflict until both of you have come up with a creative solution that satisfies both. You both now own the solution. Dr. Stephen Covey refers to this creative solution as the "Third Alternative," an alternative that neither of you had previously thought of but which both of you have developed when you put your heads and your hearts together.

Example

As an example of Steps 3 to 6 above, let me describe an issue between a national sales manager and his district sales supervisor (DSS). The latter wants the authority to approve requests for deals by the outlets in his district because he knows his customers and the kind of business they give to their company. On the other hand, the national sales manager wants to approve all requests for deals so that the same standards are applied to every one.

The national sales manager asked the DSS to tell him the reasons why he would want to do the approval. The following were cited by the DSS:

1. He wants to insure effective control within the district since he knows all the outlets and the volume and pace of the business in each.
2. He wants to insure fast decision and action and avoid red tape.
3. He wants to take responsibility to achieve his district's sales objectives.

After listing these down, the sales manager also listed his reasons for wanting to approve all deals. These are:

1. He wants to insure that the same standards are applied to all requests for deals, regardless of district and geographic location.
2. He wants to protect the profitability of the company.
3. He wants to prevent abuse of the power to approve.

Areas of agreement

After each of them had understood the other's position, the sales manager invited the DSS for both of them to identify and list down their areas of agreement based on their separate "wants" list. Together, they listed the following areas of agreement.

1. Both of them want to increase sales.
2. Both of them want to protect the profitability of the company.
3. Both of them want to be fair to all the other DSSs and to all customers who request for deals.

Creative solution

By this time, the DSS was now smiling, and was evidently feeling comfortable and at ease. They brainstormed on a win-win creative solution to their issue. They listed down all possible solutions, even outrageous ones. Then, they went back to evaluate each solution in their list. Was the solution win-win? In the end, they both agreed that the sales manager will give authority to the DSS (and to the other DSSs as well) to approve requests for deals within his district up to certain limits established by previously agreed upon guidelines. Beyond this limit, the sales manager would then do the approval.

Impractical, you say? Theoretical, you shake your head. Try it. Do not pour cold water on something before you have even tried it. Remember the prerequisites? The steps won't work without them.

While conflict resolution is useful, conflict prevention is more productive, easier and generally requires less time and energy. Conflicts often arise when there is lack of definition or clarity of job roles among the people in a team, thereby calling for a need to confront and resolve. In such a case, definition and clarification of responsibility, authority and accountability before team members start working together could prevent conflict and increase team and organizational productivity.

Another way of preventing conflict is conducting team building activities. The process used in such activities enable team members to get to know one another better, opens up lines of communication, and very often, builds trust, which is the foundation of positive relationships in a team. When lines of communication are opened up, team members can now agree on a common goal and make plans on how to achieve them. Part of the process used in team building activities is for participants to recognize and openly acknowledge sources of present and potential conflicts and working together on how they can best resolve them.

(Ms. Santamaria is a consultant specializing in career development, organization development and HRD. She has conducted team building programs for a number of companies in the Top 1000 Corporations, such as Meralco, Jardine Davies, Eastern Telecommunication, Glaxo, Interphil and others. She has given seminars on conflict resolution skills. She and her husband Jorge manage Career Systems, Inc., a consulting and training organization. For questions and comments, e-mail carsys@qinet.net.*)*

How do you conduct an information interview?

WORKING WOUNDED

Bob Rosner

DEAR WW: I'm trying to move up in my industry and I've been going out on a lot of information interviews. I work really hard at them and I feel like I've got a good track record to show off, but I haven't gotten any offers.

What Gives?

I recently learned from a newspaper article that all wildfires aren't created equal. There are "hot" fires, which burn at over 5,000 degrees and burn everything in sight (like the fires that burned Florida so viciously this summer). And then there are "cool" fires, which burn at about 2,000 degrees and scorch only low standing brush. According to forestry experts, occasional "cool" fires are actually good for a forest.

Well, like those 5,000 degree blazes, it sounds like you're burning a bit too hot and scorching the potential of your interviews. Try cooling off a bit and remembering that an information interview is different from a job interview: your task is not to wow the person with all your credentials but rather to listen to that person and gather as much information as you can. For advice on how to do this, I turned to Cliff Hakim's book "When You Lose Your Job" (Berrett Kohler, 1998). It's full of insight and strategies for anyone looking for a new job. I've adapted the following from it.

1. Have a reason for calling. Before scheduling an information interview, think about what that person has to offer you: insight on a particular industry or company? A reaction to a business idea? Thoughts on industries where your specific skills would be an asset? Take time before you call to establish a game plan for each person.

2. Have a list of questions ready to ask. Once you know what you want to learn, draw up a list of questions that will help you learn it. Include general questions (e.g. "what makes you successful?") and specific ones ("what trends are affecting this industry?") Ask the person to clarify her points with concrete examples.

3. Limit the amount of time you're asking for. Always ask for a specific amount of time (I prefer 20 minutes) and then stick to it. One of the best reputations you can have in business is as someone who appreciates the value of time (especially someone else's).

4. Ask each person to introduce you to someone else. Business cards might not be as fun to collect as Beanie Babies—but in the long run they're more valuable. So ask everyone you meet to recommend other people for you to contact.

5. Keep people posted on your progress. Once people have spent time with you, they've made an investment—and they want to know it was appreciated. So write to thank them. And keep them posted on your progress. They'll appreciate it, and you'll have made a lasting contact.

Next time you're doing an information interview, make it clear that a fire burns within you—but at the same time, keep your cool!

Here are the results of the recent workingwounded,com/ ABCnews.com poll:

Which best describes your feelings about information interviews?

—Inane, job interviews are the key, 16.2 percent

—Important, but overrated, 32.6 percent

—Invaluable, info is power, 51.1 percent

Our winning strategy for Information Interviews comes from John K. in Seattle, WA. "Every profession has rules that make it hard for new people to break in. But they also have exceptions to those rules. Information interviews can help you find people who have successfully broken the rules. Then you can ask those people to show you how they did it. I've learned that the old saying is wrong: exceptions don't prove the rule—they prove that rules can almost always be broken."

(Send feedback to bob@workingwounded.com)

Doctors, dentists dilemmas

Advice

FOR THE ANXIOUS PERSON AT WORK

ILLUSTRATION BY ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

THE TWO articles we wrote on doctors have caught the attention of our readers. We are featuring their feedback to continue the interesting conversation we started.

Doctor's feedback

"I felt disappointment at the young doctor who studied and trained in the premier medical school of the land and most likely had his tuition subsidized by the government during his studies. He had a sizeable salary when he was in residency training compared with us who studied and trained in a 'private' college of medicine and teaching hospital.

"There is no oversupply of medical specialists in the Philippines. But there is an oversupply of medical specialists in Metro Manila because the big hospitals are there. If you go into provincial practice, you will see the dearth of medical specialists in the hospitals. Provincial practice can become lucrative if you put your heart in it.

"Health management organizations, I agree, have encroached on how the physician can charge nowadays and this is the bane of all doctors even in the United States and western countries. Then, how does compassion for the poor equate with low income? The primary purpose of being a doctor is not to enrich oneself but to cure. I've seen in practice that being compassionate to the poor compensates for itself in other ways. I see doctors in their Expeditions and Pajeros, BMWs and Audis, Honda Accords and the like in Metro Manila and they have time to play golf. Maybe the good doctor does not own a BMW yet in his six years of practice?"

Concerned Doctor

Dentist reacts

"I just read your article dated March 6, 2002 about the disappointed medical doctor. I am a dentist by profession. I have had my fair share of hard study in a leading local university. I took post-graduate studies both locally and in the US for four years collectively. I went back to the Philippines to practice my profession for a couple of reasons. One is to practice my acquired specialty due to the demand for and lack of dentists who have studied this area in dentistry. Then, I was hoping also to teach others of my field of study. I had the idea that the Philippines is not going anywhere but up, so the inspiration of riding the wave of Philippine progress was an attractive one.

"With this concept and the competence of a doctor, I started a general practice to generate my initial bread and butter and then move into specialty work when my income is enough to sustain my basic needs in order for me to expand. But all these expectations are now painfully not yet realized.

"In comparison with MDs, the expenses of study of a dentist are equal or more than the MDs. The equipment needed to set up a dental practice is expensive. Compensation is really not that great. For the mass population, getting dental treatment is a luxury and not a basic health need.

"In a lecture in a Philippine Dental Association Meeting, the lecturer described the priorities of a patient as misplaced. One patient complained that the reason for his not getting his dental work-up is the distance of the dental office. Yet, they meet regularly in a golf course four times the distance from the patient's home and the dental office. I have a patient who complained to me that a visit to the beauty parlor would cost her P3,000! The parlor work will last from two days to a week. And yet we dentists hear complaints from patients for a P800 filling work as expensive. And they usually expect the filling to last forever. Just compare the education of hairdressers (no offense meant to hairdressers) and training of a doctor. Tell me where is justice? In addition, the lecturer bravely asked what the Philippine Dental Association is doing. We have not seen a single billboard saying "see your dentist" in all my years of practice.

"The problems and frustrations in the dental profession are many. Plenty of clinicians go abroad to seek their fortune in another country. We usually hear that the best doctors in the world are Filipinos. But they are usually abroad. I in turn plan to stay here in the Philippines still hoping for the better. But the question remains, until when? We know where the problems lie—in graft and corruption, red tape, inefficiency, political speculations, crab mentality, etc. How come we know all these problems and yet there is nothing done to solve it? I find that your articles are very good and substantial. Keep up the good work."

Frustrated Dentist

Another dentist's reaction

"I'm writing this letter in reference to your article last March 6. I share the sentiments of 'Disappointed Doctor.' The same thing is happening with the dental profession. The factors he enumerated which contributed to the decline of doctors' incomes are the same factors we dentists are facing. Adding to that is the sad reality that dental health is not a priority among Filipino families. Being a victim of a hold-up right inside my clinic early in my practice, I started to lose interest practicing in our country. I thought of migrating to another country but because of my profession, I was denied a visa. I have opted to stay and search for other avenues. I am in my late twenties and lucky enough to have wonderful parents who financially support me. I am not now into full time practice. I am studying to be an educator. I feel that a career shift for me is inevitable in the future. I haven't given up hope for our country. No, not yet. Thank you for reading my letter. God speed."

Hopeful Dentist

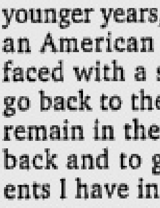
Another chance

First of all, I want to thank you for writing and expressing your views. I thank you, too for giving this country a chance. In my younger years, while studying in an American university, I was faced with a similar choice. To go back to the Philippines or to remain in the US. I chose to go back and to give whatever talents I have in the service of the country. An activist and participant in the First Quarter Storm, I could not turn my back on our country.

At the same time, I recognize that our country suffers from fundamental flaws. Peter Wallace, in his address at the recent Ancilla CEO Forum, summarizes them: politics-vested interest versus the national good, uncontrolled population growth, weak educational system, corruption, inadequate infrastructure, a stagnant agricultural system, inadequate focus on job creation, a judiciary in need of major improvement and security.

I hope that the collective pain in our hearts for our country so full of unrealized potential will provide us the energy to work together to address the ills.

From my end, we at my company, Ancilla, service enterprises so that they develop, grow and create more jobs. Part of our profits is given to help poor families and communities attain self-sufficiency. Look around at what you can do to become part of the solution. I salute all of you. May God reward all your endeavors.



(Ms Puangco is CEO and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting. Send comments, feedback or requests for advice through e-mail to ancillaedc@ pacific.net.ph or fax to 892-2902.)

Holy Week tradition of silence gives inner awareness

RECIPES *for* LEARNING

Moje Ramos Aquino

LAST Holy Monday morning, a young taxi driver asked me, "Ma'am, *bawal na po bang magsalita ngayon?*"

Since I was young, my mother would always tell us to refrain from being noisy and keep silent starting Ash Wednesday and until Easter Sunday. She would instruct us to be quiet and look inside ourselves, examine our lives and be aware of our thoughts, feelings, intentions, goals and speech. She emphasized that God Himself is contemplating the enormity of all our sins and He doesn't need anymore vexations.

Silent days

For our family, Fridays after Ash Wednesday are strictly meatless and "silent" days. No parties, no big celebrations, no loud TV or radio, no laughing aloud. We go on *visita Iglesia,* do the Station of the Cross, pray rosary, engage in quiet conversations and reflections and, if there is an opportunity, go onretreat or recollection.

Domingo de Ramos or Palm Sunday is a joyous day. We go to church, buy the biggest and most beautiful *palaspas*, edge our way to the altar to catch the sprinkling of holy water and blessings and proudly wave the *palaspas* to celebrate Christ's coming.

Holy Monday up to Maundy Thursday is a time for deep reflection, examination of conscience, confession of sins, action planning on how to amend our life and more praying of the rosary.

We go on a seafood diet, mostly the dried variety—*tuyo, daing, tinapa, dilis, pusit*—cooked in many creative ways—and our favorite *laing* or taro leaves cooked in a generous amount of coconut milk, flavored with *dinailan*, Bicolandia's delicate caked shrimp paste, and spiked with *siling labuyo*. Heaven!

We join the *pabasa* and sing to our hearts delight. Our favorite place used to be Taytay where there are *pabasa* in every street corner and lots of friends and food. You only need to sing one or two stanzas of the *pasyon* and they serve you steamy and delicious *sotanghon* soup. We also have our own family *pabasa* from Thursday noon to Friday noon. During the wee hours of the morning when the oldies are tired and fast asleep, the young ones take over the microphone and sing rock and roll. Neighbors come and go especially during mealtimes but there is food 24 hours.

Maundy Thursday is for *visita Iglesia*. We visit at least 14 churches and do one Station of the Cross in one church until we finish all 14 stations. We marvel at our beautifully designed and decorated churches. We look forward to our visit to the Sta. Ana Church in Panaderos, Manila for their well-prepared and themed *visita*. We look forward to eating out for *merienda* or sometimes dinner.

Respect

After three o-clock in the afternoon on Good Friday, we practice total silence and minimal action, if possible. We take a bath before noon or the next day, Saturday. From noon till three, we listen to the Seven Last Words either in church or from the radio. Fasting is encouraged. More reflections and praying in your own room. We wear brown, black or gray dress as a sign of respect for Christ dying to save us from our sins.

Black Saturday is preparing for the long midnight procession and Mass. Small children are encouraged to jump as high as they can at the stroke of midnight and after the midnight Mass if they want to grow taller. The day is generally uneventful and the mood is still generally silent and introspective. But there are no more stern pleadings to be quiet. If we were out of town and in a beach area, swimming would be now allowed.

Then, we have the glorious Easter Sunday! God is resurrected and will live again in our hearts. We indulge in laughter and real food (lots of it!). We wear our Sunday Dress. Alleluia!

Traditions

These were our rituals in the Holy Week of my youth.

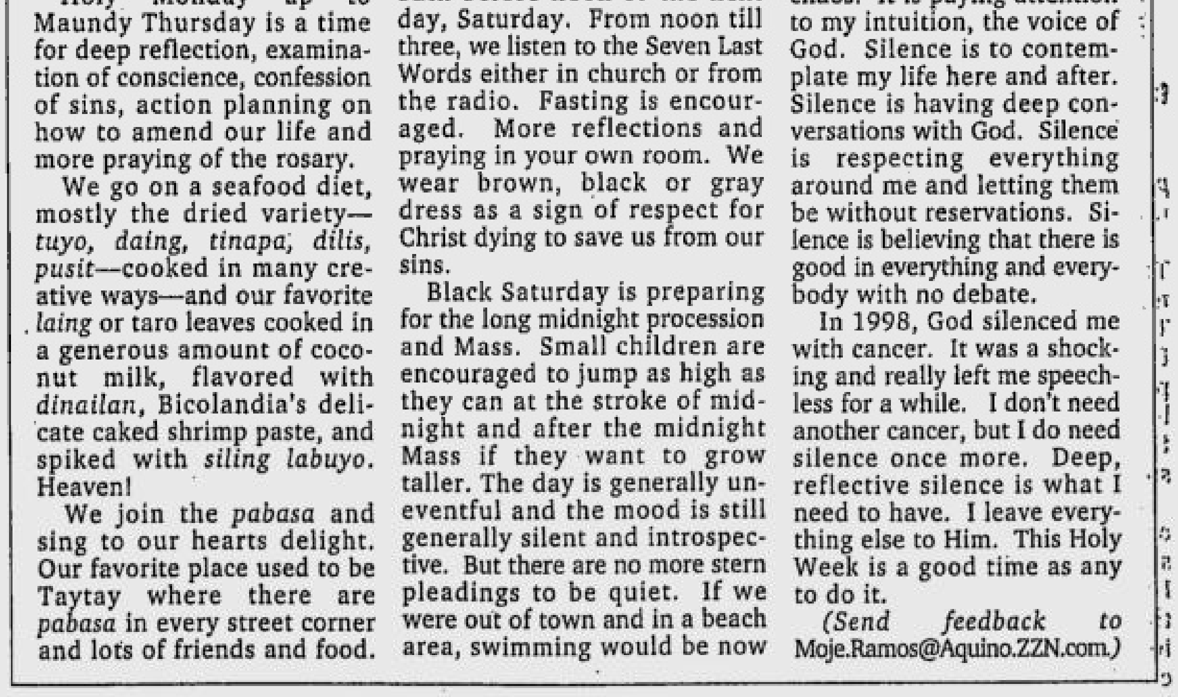
Most of my adult life, I've tried to continue these traditions. But I am not always successful in keeping quiet. I have to make a lot of effort maintaining silence as an adult, a mother and a career woman. There seems to be a lot of work to do, distractions, things to say, places to go, activities, events to watch, problems to solve, decisions to make, meetings to attend, plans to make, people to meet, etc.

For me, silence means not to talk, not to make unnecessary movements, not to think of mundane and not so pleasant thoughts. It mean being simple—in dress, accessories and everything around me. Silence means avoiding noise, loud persons and events. It means keeping my heart free from any whim and fancy.

Silence is to be gentle and tender in my action and speech. It is maintaining my equanimity in the midst of chaos. It is paying attention to my intuition, the voice of God. Silence is to contemplate my life here and after. Silence is having deep conversations with God. Silence is respecting everything around me and letting them be without reservations. Silence is believing that there is good in everything and everybody with no debate.

In 1998, God silenced me with cancer. It was a shocking and really left me speechless for a while. I don't need another cancer, but I do need silence once more. Deep, reflective silence is what I need to have. I leave everything else to Him. This Holy Week is a good time as any to do it.

(Send feedback to Moje.Ramos@Aquino.ZZN.com.*)*


MARAMING SALAMAT SA SUPORTA N'YO! TULOY ANG LIGAYA!
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
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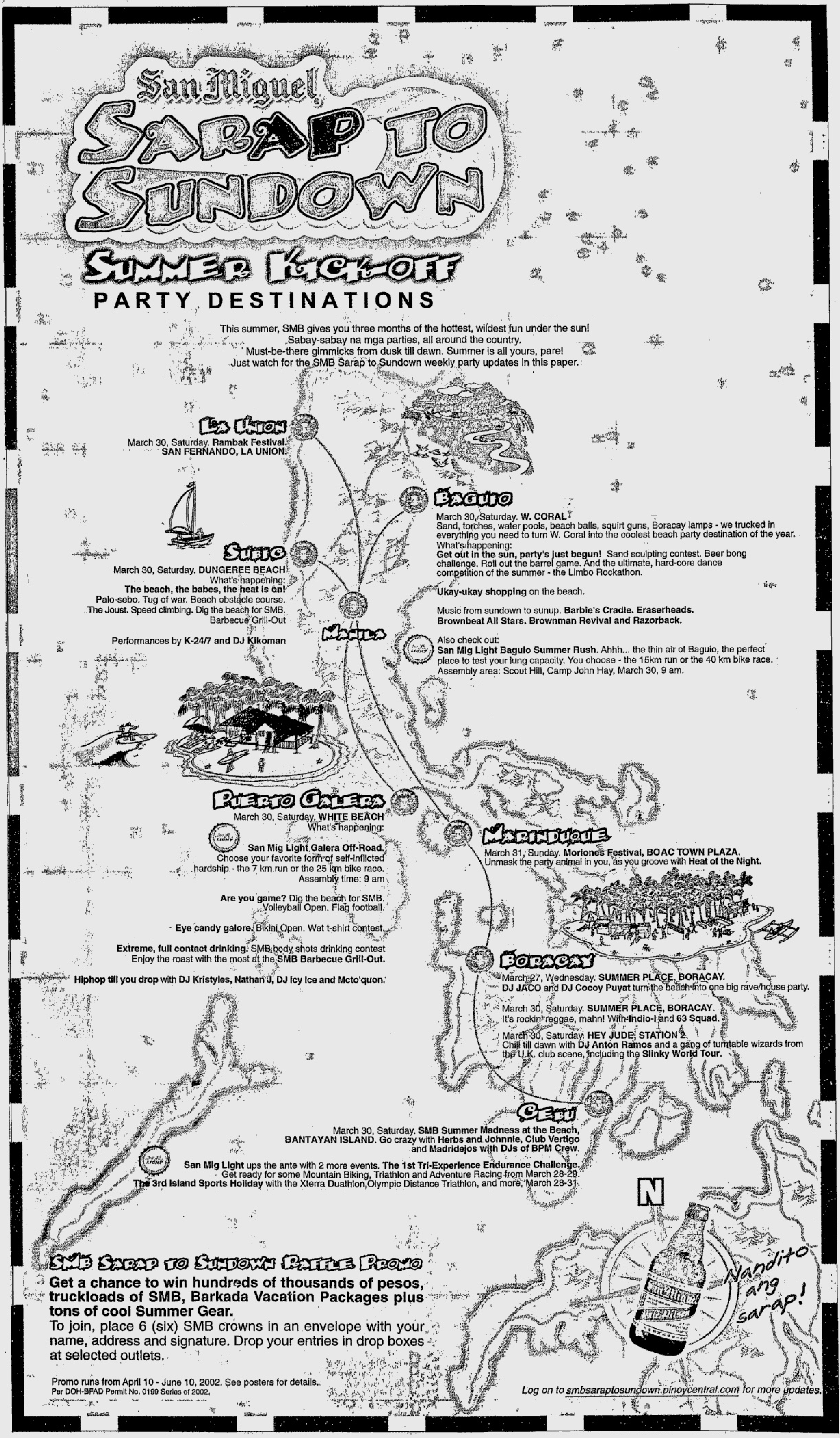
STRESS RELIEF AT THE PEOPLE AT WORK LIVE! SEMINAR SERIES

Tita Datu Puangco, People at Work columnist and president of Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc., shares her reflections on how to manage work-related stress by living the "rainbow life" in the recently concluded People at Work Live! Seminar Series on Change Management. Together with her Ancilla staff, Ms. Puangco led the participants through stress-relieving dance exercises and "shibashi" movements. The March seminar series was made possible with the support of Job Market, Equitable PCI Bank, ABS-CBN Publishing/ Metro Working Mom, Edsamall Philippines, Adobo Interactive, Ancilla Enterprise Development Consulting, Inc., Center for Leadership and Change, Inc. and S & G International Consulting Inc. The next People at Work Live! Seminar Series (Key Competencies Series) will be held on May 28, 29 & 30, 2002 from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. each day at the Santiago Hall, Equitable PCI Bank Tower I, Makati Ave., Makati City. E-mail pawlive@edsamall.com.ph for more information.



San Miguel SARAP TO SUNDOWN

SUMMER KICK-OFF PARTY DESTINATIONS

This summer, SMB gives you three months of the hottest, wildest fun under the sun!
Sabay-sabay na mga parties, all around the country.
Must-be-there gimmicks from dusk till dawn. Summer is all yours, pare!
Just watch for the SMB Sarap to Sundown weekly party updates in this paper.

LA UNION

March 30, Saturday. **Rambak Festival.**
SAN FERNANDO, LA UNION.

SUBIC

March 30, Saturday. **DUNGEREE BEACH**
What's happening:
The beach, the babes, the heat is on!
Palo-sebo. Tug of war. Beach obstacle course.
The Joust. Speed climbing. Dig the beach for SMB.
Barbecue Grill-Out

Performances by **K-24/7 and DJ Kikoman**

MANILA

BAGUIO

March 30, Saturday. **W. CORAL**
Sand, torches, water pools, beach balls, squirt guns, Boracay lamps - we trucked in everything you need to turn W. Coral into the coolest beach party destination of the year.
What's happening:
Get out in the sun, party's just begun! Sand sculpting contest. Beer bong challenge. Roll out the barrel game. And the ultimate, hard-core dance competition of the summer - the Limbo Rockathon.

Ukay-ukay shopping on the beach.

Music from sundown to sunup. **Barbie's Cradle. Eraserheads. Brownbeat All Stars. Brownman Revival and Razorback.**

Also check out:
San Mig Light Baguio Summer Rush. Ahhh... the thin air of Baguio, the perfect place to test your lung capacity. You choose - the 15km run or the 40 km bike race. Assembly area: Scout Hill, Camp John Hay, March 30, 9 am.

PUERTO GALERA

March 30, Saturday. **WHITE BEACH**
What's happening:

San Mig Light Galera Off-Road.
Choose your favorite form of self-inflicted hardship - the 7 km.run or the 25 km bike race.
Assembly time: 9 am

Are you game? Dig the beach for SMB. Volleyball Open. Flag football.

Eye candy galore. Bikini Open. Wet t-shirt contest.

Extreme, full contact drinking. SMB body shots drinking contest
Enjoy the roast with the most at the **SMB Barbecue Grill-Out.**

Hiphop till you drop with **DJ Kristyles, Nathan J, DJ Icy Ice and Mcto'quon.**

MARINDUQUE

March 31, Sunday. **Moriones Festival, BOAC TOWN PLAZA.**
Unmask the party animal in you, as you groove with **Heat of the Night.**

BORACAY

March 27, Wednesday. **SUMMER PLACE, BORACAY.**
DJ JACO and **DJ Cocoy Puyat** turn the beach into one big rave/house party.

March 30, Saturday. **SUMMER PLACE, BORACAY.**
It's rockin' reggae, mahn! With **Indio-I** and **63 Squad.**

March 30, Saturday. **HEY JUDE, STATION 2.**
Chill till dawn with **DJ Anton Ramos** and a gang of turntable wizards from the U.K. club scene, including the **Slinky World Tour.**

CEBU

March 30, Saturday. **SMB Summer Madness at the Beach, BANTAYAN ISLAND.** Go crazy with **Herbs and Johnnie, Club Vertigo** and **Madridejos with DJs of BPM Crew.**

San Mig Light ups the ante with 2 more events. **The 1st Tri-Experience Endurance Challenge.**
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The 3rd Island Sports Holiday with the Xterra Duathlon,Olympic Distance Triathlon, and more, March 28-31.

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Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0199 Series of 2002.

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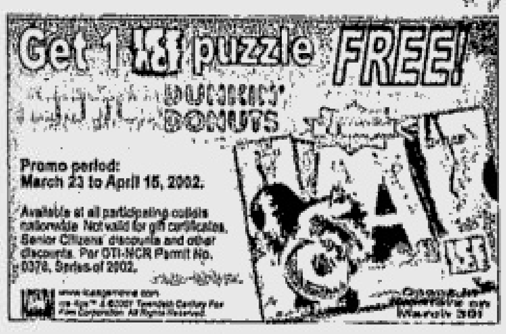
LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso ◎ Chief of Correspondents Pam Pastor

to be you • to be young • to be young • to be • To be you!

2bU!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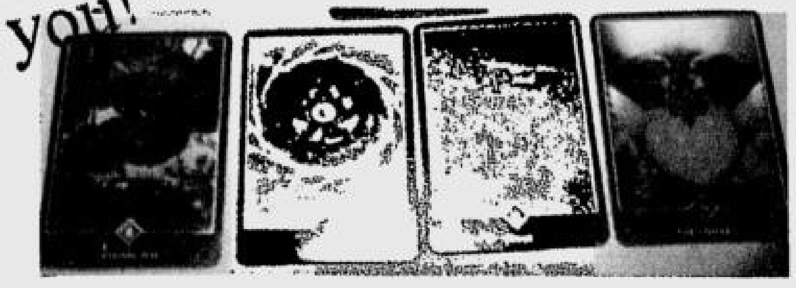
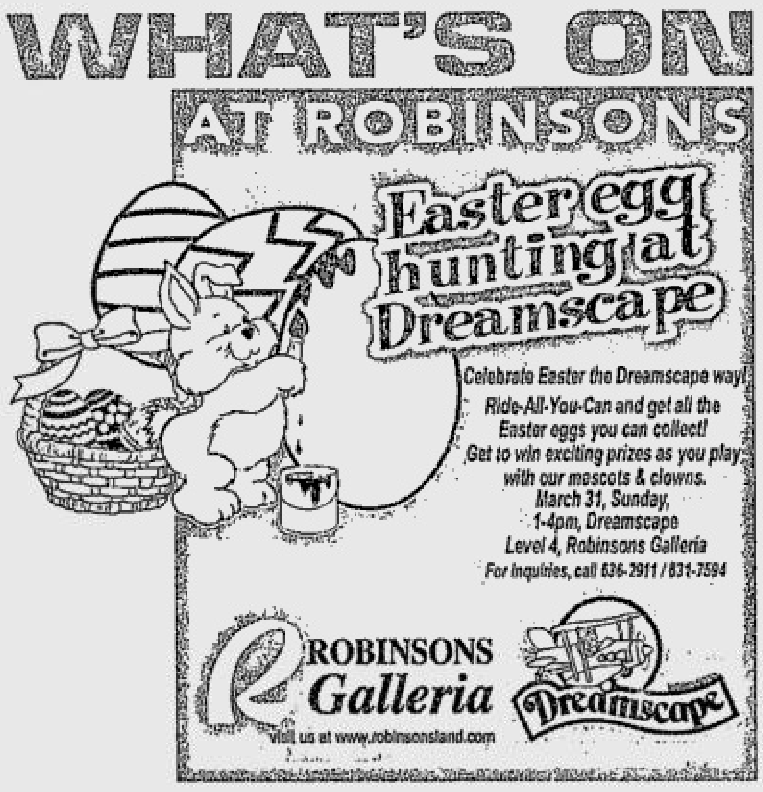
Gaining my religion

PRINCE OF EGYPT



Getting holy this Holy Week, 2bU! surveys the faith expressions of the younger generation, the big and little sacrifices the youth make to foster a deeper spirituality, the best movies with religious themes, and the best piscine and veggie dishes to survive a meat-frowning Lent

WHAT'S ON AT ROBINSONS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1) 8:30 - 12:30 CHILDREN'S ART Includes Baking, Cooking & Cake Decorating - P9,500.00 - April 8 - 12, 2002 / Ages 8 - 12 yrs old. April 15 -19, 2002 / Ages 12 and up.

2) April 1, 2, 3, 4, & 5, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - MASTER COURSE IN CAKE DECORATING (BASIC) - P7,500. Learn the practical & easy method of making 20 kinds of icing flowers, simple borders, scrolls & strings, cake designing, sugar molding, color flow, color technique, wedding cake. *Next schedule: May 6 - 10, 2002*

3) April 6, 2002 - NEW CAKES, PASTRIES AND COOKIES - P2,500. Cooked Carrot Cake, Banana Cake, Peanut Butter, Coconut Cookies, Choco-Chip Cookies, Chocolate Nut, Hopia, Siopao. Free Ingredients. *Next schedule: May 11, 2002*

4) April 8, 9, 10, 11 & 12, 2002/ 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - ADVANCED GUMPASTE & FOREIGN METHOD CAKE DECORATING - P7,500. New method of gumpaste, flowers, objects, marzipan, quilling, swags & ribbons, ribbon insertion, finest string works, lace pieces, fondant, chocolate fondant. **Next schedule: May 13 - 17, 2002**

5) April 13, 2002 - LEARN THE SUGAR-FREE CAKES AND BREADS - P4,000. Banana, Apple Almond, Chocolate, Apple Walnut & Carrot Cakes, All-Wheat Breads & Raisin Breads. Free Ingredients. *Next schedule: May 18, 2002*

6) April 17, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - NEW METHOD ON FONDANT USING LACE MATS, ROLLING PIN, SWAGS & RIBBONS - P3,000. Next schedule: May 22, 2002.

7) April 15, 16, 17, 18 & 19, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - COLD PORCELAIN FLOWER COURSES WITH RECIPE - P3,500 **each.** 1) Sampaguita, Sunflower, Waling-Waling 2) Rose, Cattleya, Cymbidium 3). Magnolia, Gerbera, Lilies.

8) April 15, 16, 17, 18 & 19, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - BASIC COMMERCIAL BAKING - P9,500. 30 recipes of the basic cakes, breads, pies, pastries and cookies. Free ingredients. *Next schedule: May 20 - 24, 2002.*

9) April 17, 18 & 19, 2002 / 8:30 am - 5:00 pm - COLD PORCELAIN DOLL COURSE - P7,500. Make everlasting dolls using the latest technique in new Cold Porcelain Recipe. *Next schedule: May 22, 23 & 24, 2002.*

10) April 22, 23, 24, 25 & 26, 2002 - SPECIAL BAKING - P10,500. Learn to make 30 kinds of special cakes from around the world. Each cake has different icing and decoration. Free Ingredients. *Next schedule: May 27 - 31, 2002*

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Procedure:
In a bowl, marinate tuna in vinegar, soy sauce, 2 tablespoons garlic, peppercorns and bayleaf. Leave for 30 minutes. Drain and reserve marinade. In a pan, heat oil from tuna and brown the remaining garlic. Add tuna and cook for a minute. Add the marinade, cook uncovered until liquid is reduced in half. Pour in the coconut cream and cook for a minute. Makes 6 servings.

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Christ is her captain

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

JASMIN Mate

An optimistic nineteener keeps the faith despite the doubts

JASMIN Mate's life was very aimless at one time. Although she was organized, responsible and in full control of her life, she felt like an expensive yacht stuck in the middle of nowhere.

It was when she accepted Christ as her Savior, when she surrendered her ship to Him that everything fell into place. The sails were raised, the map was discovered and sand was spotted.

Brought up by a religious and devoted Christian mother who took her along to every worship and Bible study, Dyas, her nickname, accepted Christ when she was 8 and should have won loyalty award from Sunday school.

At present, this optimistic nineteener continues to serve the Lord by joining home cell groups, Bible studies and youth camps while taking up mass communication. She plans to work in the Christian Far East Broadcasting Company and The 700 Club.

Dyas cites Hebrews 11:1 ("Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen") as the definition that fully captures the essence of faith. She expresses her own faith through lots of quiet time with the Lord. She believes that prayer strengthens her already intimate relationship with the Lord and that it makes her move more mountains.

For Dyas, who, just like any other Christian, believes that only Jesus Christ can save souls since He's the only Way to the Father, it is very important for other people to see Christ in her. Living her life the way God wants her to is the perfect opportunity for Christ to shine in her and she definitely doesn't need a "What Would Jesus Do?" bracelet for her to stop and think for a while before she does anything.

With all the humanitarian acts that she does together with fellow believers, others doubt her sincerity. Some people think they have something selfish up their sleeves while others believe they're crazy for dealing with juvenile delinquents and prisoners.

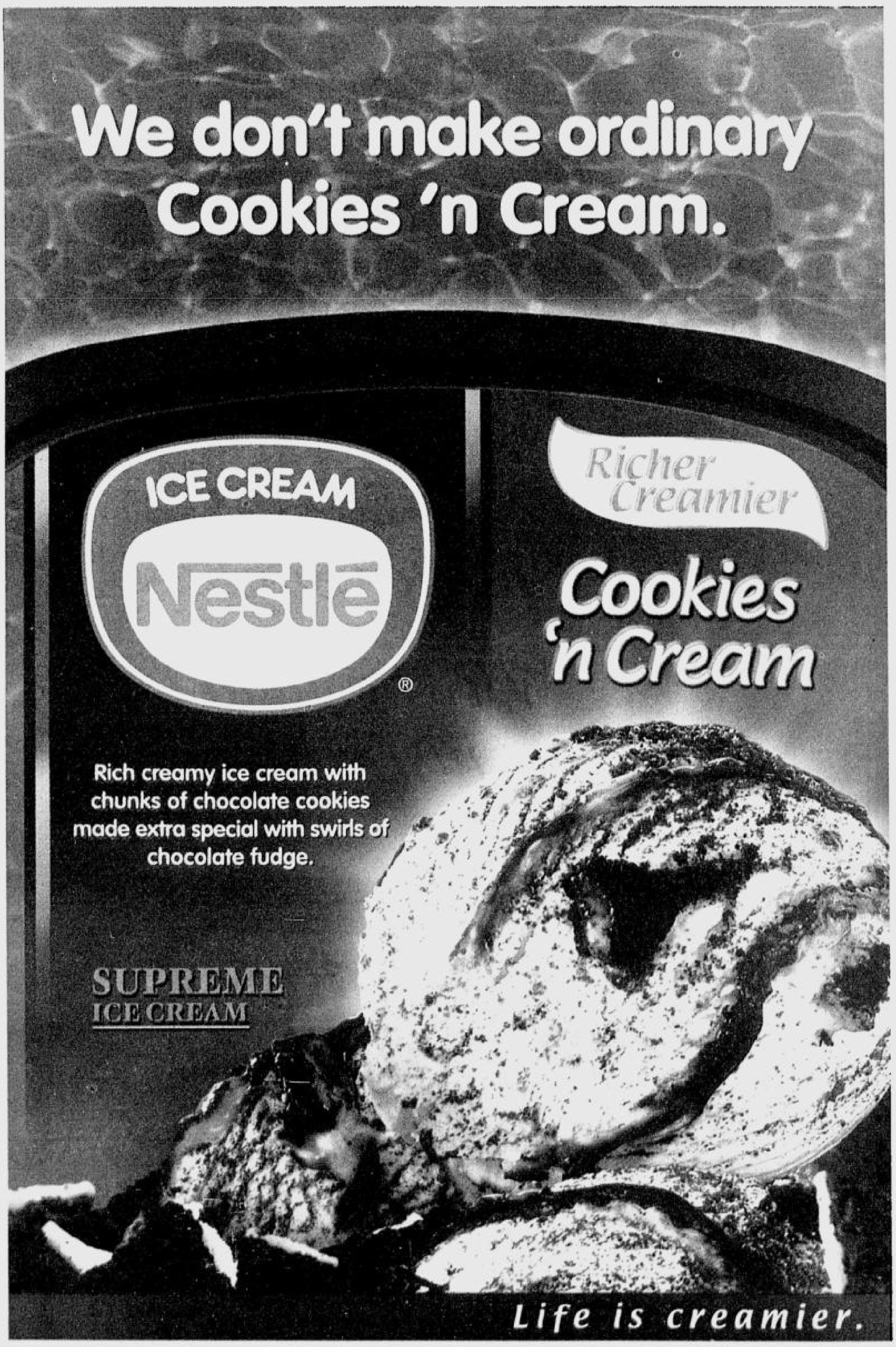
Dyas is saddened by all these wrong impressions about Christians. She urges the doubters to get to know them more. "We're not money-starved, limelight-hungry beings. And all those delinquents and prisoners have a special place in our hearts. There's nothing wrong with reaching out to them and letting them in on how God had changed our lives and that He could change theirs, too."

And it is these changes that make Dyas the happiest. She reaches cloud nine every time she gets to share her stories with others, especially when they end up as converts. Nothing beats the feeling of fulfillment that she gets, knowing that she helped save a soul by recruiting yet another soldier to the ever-growing army of God.

Ever optimistic about life, Dyas is at ease with how everything is unfolding right before her eyes. The good things are very much thanked for; the bad ones considered a piece of carrot cake, thanks to her unwavering faith in God.

For this young lady, who considers preaching the gospel at the marketplace when she was 12 as the most extreme thing that she has ever done for her faith, no one and nothing can ruin what she has with Christ. She knows that at the end of this long and trying journey, she will reach the shore and see God with His arms wide open.

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com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Loving every detail of her 'Iglesia' faith

By Giles Ivan A. Aquino
2bU! Correspondent

KRISTINE Joy C. Ilumin

KRISTINE Joy C. Ilumin, 20, is an incoming fourth-year B.S. Computer Science student in Centro Escolar University. Her family was once Catholic until her father became an Iglesia ni Cristo member and brought along the family with him to his new religion. "In his quest for something deeper, he found Iglesia ni Cristo. At first, it was hard for him to convince my mother to leave her Catholic faith," Kristine recalls.

Define faith.

"Faith is praying to him directly. You don't have to rely on religious icons for God to hear your prayers because He's the only one who can bring you salvation."

What's the best thing about your religion?

"We give due respect to God by how we dress up every time we go to church. We make sure that we look presentable in front of Him—just as how we want to look during big occasions. We make our every meeting with Him special. That's the best thing about being an Iglesia ni Cristo."

What is the worst thing about it?

"I can't think of any. I love everything about our religion, even the smallest detail of it."

How do you express your faith?

"By going to church every Thursday and Sunday with my whole heart, with no qualms, and by joining all church activities.

Who is your Savior?

"God. The fact that I am still alive is enough to consider Him as my Savior. If not for God, I don't think I would have survived my gal bladder operation. I know He's there every time I needed Him, especially at the lowest times of my life. I get to talk to Him through my prayers—just Him and me."

She believes nothing could separate her from her church, except death

What is the most extreme thing you have done in the name of religion?

"I have done nothing very extreme yet, but if the time comes that I'd get to marry my boyfriend, I won't give up my religion just as my friend will if she gets to marry hers. I have learned to love my religion and there's nothing that could separate me from it except, of course, death."

Iglesia member likes everything about her religion

By Zee Castro
2bU! Correspondent

CZARINA Nastor Villa, 19, is a typical young, hip teenager who enjoys hanging out and having fun with friends. A student of fashion design at the Philippine International School of Fashion, she dreams of starting her own ready-to-wear (RTW) line of edgy, glam-chic, rocky clothes. She is currently taking a break from school, and will attend basic drawing workshops at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts in the meantime.

Czarina says she was born into her religion Iglesia ni Cristo.

Define faith.

"Faith is your belief and trust in God or the kind of religion you practice."

What's the best thing about your religion?

"Everything about it."

What's the worst thing about it?

"Absolutely nothing."

How do you express your faith?

"I pray at least twice a day, attend worship service twice a week and I go to prayer meetings. I'm also an officer of the Children's Worship service.

Who is your savior?

"Jesus Christ."

What is the most extreme thing you have done in the name of religion?

"If your faith is strong and you deeply believe in your religion's doctrines, nothing is considered extreme."

CZARINA Nastor Villa

'If your faith is strong and you deeply believe in your religion's doctrines, nothing is considered extreme'

CHARO A. Restrivera

Jehovah's Witness has found the truth

By Leslie Ann Tan
2bUI Correspondent

CHARO A. Restrivera, 20, a graduating BS Business Economics student at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, is a Jehovah's Witness.

"After having studied the Bible with the Jehovah's Witnesses for several years, I am convinced that I have found the truth. I hope that doesn't sound egotistical, but my confidence in my religion springs from our belief that the Bible is really the inspired Word of God and so all our beliefs are Bible-based, not just [coming] from any person. All my questions about life and just about everything were answered clearly, no mysteries attached."

Define faith.

Hebrews 11:1 defines faith as "the assured expectation of things hoped for, the evident demonstration of realities though not beheld." Nah, I'm not talking about believing in something merely because you want to. Rather, we look at the operative [words] "assured" and "evident." This means that for faith to be real, it must be built on accurate knowledge and understanding of the Bible.

What's the best thing about your religion?

Personally, I believe that it's being able to use the Divine Name, Jehovah. When I pray, I always address Him by His personal name Jehovah. It creates a world of a difference because it makes me feel that someone is actually listening to what I am saying. My prayers have always been personal and heartfelt, never ritualistic and memorized. Jehovah is a loving God, not some distant and impersonal figure who does nothing but restrict people from doing what they want. Being able to address Him by His personal name draws me closer to Him. After all, how can you even have a close relationship with anyone whose personal name you don't even know and can't even say?

What's the worst thing about it?

I usually hear remarks from people saying that Jehovah's Witnesses are killjoys because everything's *bawal*. On the contrary, Jehovah's Witnesses are happy people; we enjoy close associations with our brothers and sisters at the congregation. Maybe we don't observe the holidays, but this is because these celebrations have pagan roots, and not of Christian origin. Besides, I don't need a holiday to make me express my love for other people; it's something you do every day. By the way, the only special occasion we deem important is the Memorial (Lord's Evening Meal), which commemorates the Death of Jesus Christ. This year, it will be on March 28 at sundown, and everyone's invited to attend.

How do you express your faith?

By making a conscious effort to apply what I have learned from the Bible and to share that with others through house-to-house preaching or informal encounters such as this.

Who is your savior?

Jesus Christ, the Son of God Jehovah. He is the firstborn of all creation and through him all other things in heaven and earth were created. By sacrificing his perfect life, it now becomes possible for us to ask forgiveness from our Sovereign father, God Jehovah.

What is the most extreme thing you have done in the name of religion?

Extreme? That's a heavy word. I'd rather call it the most challenging experience I've ever had. You see, Jehovah's Witnesses are known for their house-to-house preaching work and, as a member, I take part in that. While we find many people who are accommodating to the Kingdom News we bring, some households can be hostile. We are usually accused of using our Bible-based publications for income-generation, when, in fact, we don't really sell them. The work of Jehovah's Witnesses is financed through voluntary contributions, and so any donations we get from people are used to further our worldwide work of Bible education. We don't receive salaries for joining the house-to-house activity; we are all volunteers who also have secular roles as professionals, students, employees, etc. But since we are motivated by our love for Jehovah and our neighbors, we continue to [try to] reach as many people as possible—no matter how they treat us.

Catholic-educated girl likes freedom of her new religion

By Marliess V. Villamar
2bUI Correspondent

ROSAN Santiago is still as I remember her from grade school—outspoken and spunky. She is only 22 years old but her mature views on life belie her age (except where boy bands are concerned).

When she told me that she was exploring other religions, I wasn't surprised, although she was educated in Catholic schools most of her life.

Rosan has never been the type to "go with the flow," so to speak. Perfectly comfortable in her own skin, she shuns conventions. She says she is more of an agnostic these days. Although she does not have a particular religion, she firmly believes that there is a higher power. She also admits that she has been studying paganism, particularly wicca, which fascinates her because it's "freer" and does not look at religion the way Catholics do.

The Catholics' view that religion is a set of rules/commandments to be followed to avoid eternal damnation is ridiculous to her. She is more comfortable with paganism or wicca, because it is a lot less judgmental and it doesn't have a concept of sin; good and bad are relative.

> She is more comfortable with paganism or wicca, because it is less judgmental and doesn't have a concept of sin

Here's more of Rosan's thoughts on religion:

Define faith.

Faith, to me, is believing in something even if you can't see it—yet.

What's the best thing about your "religion"?

It's not as stifling or as rigid as most religions. It lets you discover and explore your own strengths and powers in relation to the universe's higher powers. And it pretty much lets you do your own thing as long as you don't harm anyone.

What's the worst thing about it?

Being misunderstood. When you say you're practicing wicca/witchcraft, people either look at you like you're kidding or just plain out of your mind. Most people don't know much about wicca and witchcraft other than what they see on TV or in the movies. And while some of the newer shows that deal with the practice seem to have done some research on the subject, of course there's still a lot of embellishments when it is presented. If you do some serious research on the wicca/witchcraft, you will see that it's not all about magic and spells and "vanquishing demons" etc. Wicca/witchcraft is a very old religion. It's very serious stuff.

Also, there's all the negative propaganda associated with witchcraft and wicca. Even if you're not very familiar with the history, I'm sure you've heard about witches being burned at the stake or tortured in the old days. And even though that doesn't happen now, you still get judged and condemned and are deemed crazy when people find out that you're practicing wicca/witchcraft. The fact that the Philippines is predominantly Christian doesn't make it any easier for us.

How do you express your faith?

I live my life the best way I know how, do whatever I need to do to be a better person mentally, physically and spiritually; be the best friend/sister/daughter I can be, and during Sabbath I light a candle to mark the occasion in my own way.

Who is your savior?

I don't think wicca has a concept of "savior" the way Christians and Catholics have Jesus. We do, however, worship several deities, the highest of which is the lady/mother goddess.

What is the most extreme thing you have done in the name of religion?

I can't really say I have done anything "extreme" in the name of religion. I used to be an active member of my religious community back when I was still a Catholic. I went on mission trips, conducted youth camps and leaders" conferences. Extreme for my present religion, however... well... ask me when people get the crazy notion of burning witches at the stake again. (Laughs)

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'When we destroy a part of nature, a part of us is destroyed'

'Misunderstood' religion is really about love

By Maui V. Reyes
2bU! Correspondent

MAY the fleas of a thousand *askals* infest your armpits," I said to my friend Aldwin who, being the "guy" he was, got us lost for the nth time because he did not want to stop and ask for directions. Mark, seated behind us, started to laugh.

"That, in itself, is already a spell," he said.

Mark is, in almost everything, a normal 18-year-old. He goes to a reputable high school, loves to share creepy ghost stories, and listens to anything from pop to rock music. He has his own opinions on teachers and pretentious people, and loves to write. And, like almost everyone else, he has a religion—or a faith, if you will. His is wicca.

"We were in Baguio before, doing a ritual in an open field [with the permission of the owner], and some kids on the other side of the field thought we were raising the dead!" Mark laughs.

A practitioner for five years, Mark has participated in rituals and celebrations, and joined numerous organizations. He started by "dabbling" in spells and magic, eventually adopted wicca after understanding the values and beliefs of the religion. "I was blessed with liberal parents," he laughs. "But also in our family, we have many relatives that practice various religions. There are Catholics, Buddhists, El Shaddai. We have a rule that whatever the belief is [of anyone in the] family, you don't judge it. It's about respecting each other."

What is wicca?

"[Wicca teaches that] you should treat everyone in perfect love and in perfect trust. And you should celebrate nature. [It is] a celebration of life. All of your birthdays are set in one year. That's the celebration of wicca. Nature is given a human aspect. [Wicca] believes that there is a divine entity, and it has no form or image. Instead, it is represented by female and male aspects, which are balanced, and flow continuously. Under the female and male aspects, there would be the elements, the animals, and nature. This is what sets wicca apart from paganism. In paganism, they believe in any form of magic, which can be animals or the rocks and trees. In wicca, we worship only one divine entity [but] everything has life. It is believed that everything has energy. Before we pick anything from a tree, for example, to use for our instruments, we ask the tree for permission, and effect an exchange of energy. In a sense, the tree gives us a part of them and we give them a part of us. It could be a rice offering, or just plain saliva. It's an exchange of two energies, of two living beings.

SOME basic tools

What is the best thing about your religion?

There is not only one best thing about wicca. It is a religion of love. You love nature, you love humanity, you do not harm anything because when you harm something, you destroy something you love.

What is the worst part?

The misconceptions that people have toward wicca. We don't do human sacrifices. We don't kill anything without good reason, for example, fish for food. That's survival. To clear up the devil thing: the main symbol—the masculine side of nature—is depicted as a person who's half-human, half-lamb, and has horns. The Bible states that the devil is half-beast and is anti-Christ. Wicca is not against Christianity. It is not against any religion.

What are some of the similarities with other religions?

In the Witch's Creed, it says "harm to none, do what you will." It is somewhat similar to the Christian's Golden Rule—what you sow is what you reap. And so, with us, whatever harm [you do] will come back to you. We also do spells. [A spell] is just a focused prayer whether you do it by words or thought, by writing... In a sense, everything you do in life is magic. The simple writing of poetry is magic. The simple work you do is magic. Witchcraft is integrated in other religions because all religions [involve] just praising one divine entity. It's all the same thing. The difference is in how you do it.

TAROT CARDS. Mark has 10 decks.

To join an "Open to Everyone Whatever Religion with the Goal to Study Wicca" group, e-mail psychop584@icqmail.com. The group meets once a month to discuss certain topics of wicca. Also join PExWiccanStudyGroup@yahoogroups.com.

E-mail the author at volcanogirl28@ hotmail.com

Search for religion leads to Christian rebirth

By Michelle C. Pino
2bU! Correspondent

BORN of a Roman Catholic mother and a Protestant father, Te Avs or Ava Arcenas was a Protestant by birth, educated by the Jesuits in Ateneo de Davao, and is a born-again Christian at present. Changing religions had never been a problem for her or her parents.

She recalled though that when she came to Manila in 1994 to enter the University of the Philippines, she was kind of lost, without a religion, especially after a professor in Sociology called religion "the opium of the people."

ARCENAS

Now 24 and a graduate student of Reading Education in the same university, she became a Christian through a patient roommate who unconsciously "converted" her. "*Bumilib ako*," she disclosed when she felt a warm presence in the church she was invited to. "This is it! The search is over. I know I want to belong in this church."

Define faith.

Faith is often defined as a belief in something for which there is no proof. But to me God is real and He has manifested [Himself] in ways so concrete that I can't deny the fact that He exists. Faith can't be forced on someone.

What's the best thing about your religion?

I would not say church, because church would mean a particular religion or congregation. I would rather say the ministry because it would apply to all people who share my belief. I would say that the best thing about the ministry, especially the church I am now attending, is our belief in radical holiness. Radical holiness breaks the stereotype and accepts unconventional people. By unconventional, I mean people who wear nose or tongue jewelry, dye their hair yellow, etc. Not that there are many who are like that in my church, but [we are not] prevented from allowing them in the church. Many churches *kasi* prohibit these things.

What's the worst thing about it?

When the enemy retaliates. You would know it's the enemy who is working because *sunod-sunod ang kamalasan.*

Who is your savior?

Jesus Christ, of course. Why Him? Well, among the people in different religious literature (there are other holy books aside from the Bible), it was only He who had a true claim to the title Savior. It was only He who died for my sins. It was not Moses or Mary. That is why I pray only to Him, and Him alone.

What is the most extreme thing you did for the ministry?

I cleaned the spare tire of the person I "ministered" to. It's not that extraordinary but the story is quite amazing. The person's car was with me and the Lord [gave] me [the task of] washing the car. I came upon the spare tire, and it was revealed to me that if I washed and cleaned the spare tire, the person might feel God's love from that act. So I washed the tire until it was grime-free. I made it shiny by applying tire-black, applying more when I saw it was not shiny enough. It's similar to what God will do to my friend. God will make him pure and holy (nice and shiny).

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This would-be dentist has a sweet tooth for the Lord

By Ma. Angela V. Ignacio
2bU! Correspondent,
Ateneo de Manila University

Ruth Tan-Chi, or Candy, isn't as common as they come. Although born of an American mother and a Chinese father, Candy has been living in the Philippines all her life, and has just finished her second year as a BS Biology student at the Ateneo.

Aside from getting A's even in the toughest subjects and being an incredibly gifted basketball player, she's also well-liked by everyone because of her sunny personality. Of course, those aren't the only special things about her. She's also a deeply religious Christian whose life is guided by her steadfast love for God.

What is your definition of faith?

Faith to me is believing, trusting and [changing one's life]. The simplest example I can give was shared to me many years ago. It compared faith to sitting on a chair. When I sit down on one, I put my entire weight on it and relax. This is because I believe, trust and know that the chair will hold me up. This is because true faith leads to actions. If you really believe in something with all your heart, it has to be evident in your life. You will live your life based on that faith. As the Bible says, "Faith without works is dead."

What's the best thing about your religion?

The best thing about my faith is definitely the object of my faith. I believe in an Almighty God, in one who created me, loves me and gave His only son to save me. I have a God who is not distant, but one who I can pray to whenever I want and wherever I am. Also, the best thing about it is that I really don't have to live in fear. I don't need to fear this world because God holds me, and I don't have to fear death because God holds eternity. Through faith in Jesus Christ, God promises that I "shall not perish but have eternal life."

What's the worst thing about it?

The worst/hardest things about my religion are that, one, it isn't really a religion, and two, people sometimes get scared of my "religion." When I talk to people about my faith, some think I'm trying to convert them. However, that is not the case at all. I truly believe that religion is secondary, and it is your faith and relationship with God that matters. I share my beliefs with my friends not only because I love the Lord and because He has become very much a part of my life, but because I want to share with them something that has made the entire difference in my life. It's what has given me meaning.

How do you express your faith?

I believe my fFaith is expressed in my words and actions. I try to tell those around me what I believe, and show it to them by the way I live [my faith]. I want people to see that following Jesus Christ makes a difference in one's life. It is not something theological or just idealistic, but a reality. But more importantly, I want to live a life that is pleasing to God. There are many things I can't do because the Bible and God commands us not to. It's hard, but I don't approach this negatively because I know God wants what is best for us. If He tells us not to do something, it's because it will harm us [if not in the present then in the long run].

Who is your savior?

Fortunately, this is one question that is easy to answer. Without a doubt, Jesus Christ is my Savior! Without Him, I would have no hope and would be headed for destruction—both here on earth and for eternity. I know I've sinned, but God promises the free gift of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

At first I didn't really understand what this meant. But when I came across my favorite verse in the Bible, Ephesians 2:8-9, it made so much sense. God says, "For by grace you have been saved though faith; and that no of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast." In these verses, God truly showed me that salvation is in His son Jesus Christ. It is by Faith alone in Jesus Christ that we are saved.

What is the most extreme thing you have done in the name of religion?

I think the most extreme thing is simply the fact that I'm willing to live and die for my faith. In a sense, every day involves "risk" because it is what I base my entire life upon. Even though I haven't done anything too extreme yet, I'm planning to be a missionary dentist somewhere in Asia. Whether it be areas in the Philippines, China, or Nepal, I want to be a missionary where I can use dentistry to effectively share the Gospel. But before I get there, I want to serve God wherever I am. Through His grace alone, God has given me the strength and courage to lead small groups, and to give my testimony in front of hundreds of college students. I know I can't do anything on my own, so that's why I'm glad I have a great, big, and wonderful God! Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Him who strengthens me." God is not only my strength, but my reason for living.

E-mail the author at aoshi_no_miko@hotmail.com

Fishing for Lenten treats

By Niño Mark M. Sablan
2bU! Correspondent

Go deliciously piscine this Holy Week

LENT is associated with making sacrifices. It means abstaining from crispy *pata*, fried chicken and *caldereta*, or even fasting from all food. At the least, we are compelled to restrain from eating meat and encouraged to eat fish. But with all the special fish treats, Lent has hardly become a season of sacrifice.

Dunkin Donuts' Tuna-rriffic

"Tuna-rriffic!" The poster screamed at me as I passed by Dunkin Donuts. "Okay, okay," I replied, especially after finding out that it costs only P30 and comes with a regular-sized soft drink. Upon the arrival of my tuna bunwich, I instantly took a bite and raised an eyebrow afterward. There was something about its taste that made me take a peek into what's in-between the buns. Unfortunately, there was nothing but a thin spread of tuna, mayonnaise and bits of greens. After devouring the rest of the sandwich and gulping my root beer, I discovered what made it special—the buns. Now I wait for the time Dunkin Donuts will sell their buns, preferably without the tuna spread.

A&W Tuna Salad Sandwich

I was stupid to think that at P25, A&W's Tuna Salad Sandwich would include a drink. The wrapped sandwich in my hands felt a little cold and I quickly turned skeptical. Why was it called as such? Does it have macaroni, carrots and Thousand Island dressing? As I took my skeptical first bite, I involuntarily gave a little nod. The spread was pretty thick, the tuna was chunky and the cabbage leaves were crispy. However, on my second bite, the filling overflowed everywhere and I was left with a pretty challenging snack to finish. When I finally did, I found out that adding a slice of tomato into the sandwich made the whole thing a "salad" sandwich. Okay.

Burger King's Big Fish Salad Meal

I was pretty hesitant to try Burger King's Big Fish Salad Meal because of its tag price: P79. After all, the poster suggested nothing but salad, a fish fillet and a bottomless drink. I wondered if I'd let out a burp after the whole meal. As it turned out, the fillet wasn't small and the greens were pretty abundant. There were also cheese and huge slices of onions and tomatoes. Only the dressing (either "Caesar or Thousand," according to the food attendant) was of small quantity. I did have a difficult time tossing and the whole thing was pretty boring. It would have been better if they had used tuna chunks instead of fish fillet. After the last swallow, I let out a burp.

Texas Chicken's Tuna Pita Pocket

No point in swimming around the corals and so I will go straight to the point—this truly yummy treat deserves the crown, the sash and the scepter. A very good buy at P39 (served with 12-oz iced tea or soft drink), the pita pocket overflows with a generous amount of chunky tuna spread, cheese, cabbage leaves, egg bits and tomato slices. Although cold, the flavorful filling still goes good with the pita. The only annoying thing is how there's more filling than the pita that it tends to overflow most of the time. This is one treat I hope won't disappear even after the Lenten season. I'm definitely going back to take out some to messily devour at home.

Of course, there are McDonald's Fillet-o-Fish (plus the new McFish Nuggets at P45) and Jollibee's Fish and Fries (or Fish and Rice, at P55), but we all know how they taste like.

E-mail the author at katotino@yahoo.com

Get into the spirit of Lent with the right movie

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

Watching these movies this week need not be a guilty pleasure as they are suited to the mood of the season

JESUS OF NAZARETH

PEOPLE who stay home during the Holy Week are usually faced with the problem of what to do after praying the novenas, going to church and catching up on their sleep.

Those thinking of passing the time watching movies need not consider the exercise as some kind of a guilty pleasure. TV and cable channels usually have movie marathons of typical Holy Week movies that are inspiring and tend to put people in a reflective mood. Some movies suited to the mood of the season are:

'The Ten Commandments' (1956)

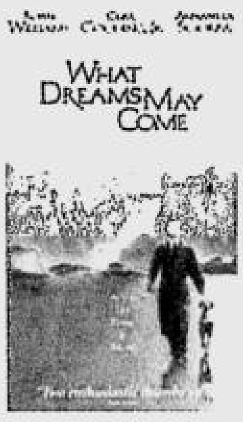
Who can forget this awesome Cecil B. De Mille classic? "The Ten Commandments" is a vivid retelling of the story of Moses (Charlton Heston) and the emancipation of the Israelites from the tyranny of the Egyptian pharaoh (Yul Brynner). Over-played though it may seem, especially if you come from a Catholic school, it's worth watching every time. The special effects are exceptional, especially for a film made in the '50s. Watch out for the parting of the Red Sea and the writing of the commandments on the stone tablets.

'What Dreams May Come' (1998)

Not your usual Robin Williams comedy, "What Dreams May Come" is the story of Dr. Chris Nielsen (Williams) and his wife Annie (Annabella Sciorra), whose kids die in a car crash. The grief-stricken Annie becomes estranged from Chris and absorbs herself in her art. Four years later, Chris also dies in a car crash and ends up in the heaven that he dreams of. He soon finds out that Annie is unable to cope with her loss and her despair leads her to suicide. With the help of his friend Albert (Cuba Gooding Jr.), Chris is determined to save Annie from hell and bring her with him to heaven. Although it may raise some philosophical and religious questions, the visual effects are definitely not to be missed.

'The Prince of Egypt' (1998)

Another version of the Ten Commandments story, "The Prince of Egypt" is more than just an animated retelling of the Exodus. Made with state-of-the-art animation (the parting of the Red Sea looks so real), it features the voices of Val Kilmer (Moses), Ralph Fiennes (Rameses), Sandra Bullock (Miriam), Michelle Pfeiffer (Tzipporah), Martin Short (Huy) and Patrick Stewart (Pharaoh Seti). The soundtrack, with the famous Whitney Houston and Mariah Carey duet "When You Believe," is as inspiring as the movie—a fitting feel-good movie for the Holy Week.



'Jesus of Nazareth' (1977)

What's Holy Week without a movie about the man who started it all? "Jesus of Nazareth," one of the many movies about the Son of God, is among the more memorable and better made. Directed by Robert Zeffirelli, the movie begins with the wedding arrangements for Joseph and Mary, then chronicles the life of Jesus (Robert Powell) all the way to his crucifixion. The great storytelling makes the six-plus hours worthwhile. The movie inspires everyone, regardless of religion.

'Joan of Arc' (1999)

Christian Duguay directs this dramatic retelling of the French saint's life. Joan (Leelee Sobieski) is a young woman who begins to hear messages from God telling her to save France. Her faith and her courage become more evident, first as she is questioned endlessly by Church officials, then in the battlefield as she fights in the name of France. Condemned by the Catholic Church as a heretic at the young age of 19, she was formally canonized as a saint nearly five centuries later. Showcasing one of the greatest and most fascinating heroines, both in history and on the screen, "Joan of Arc" is not just a religious movie, but a patriotic and feminist one as well.

'Spartacus' (1960)

It may not be your usual religious flick, but Spartacus is one of those traditional movies you see on cable at this time of year. Spartacus (Kirk Douglas) is a rebellious Libyan slave bought by a proprietor of a gladiator school. This is an epic tale about his fights in the arena, his romance with female slave Varinia (Jean Simmons) and his quest for freedom. It's a memorable old-fashioned version of the Russell Crowe movie "Gladiator."

E-mail the author at cathy_young1@yahoo.com

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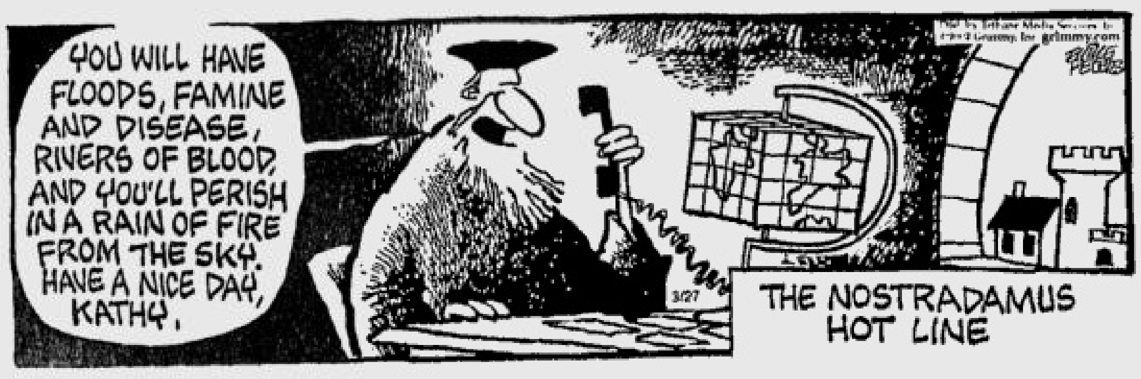
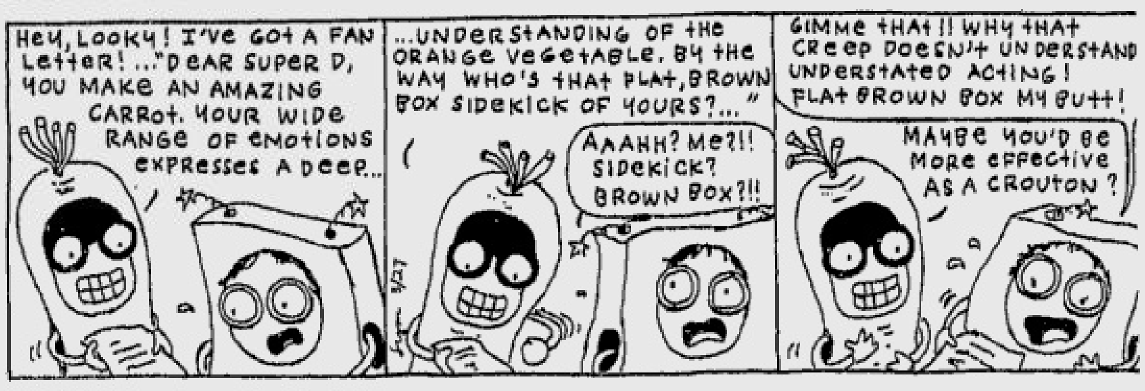
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM

BY MIKE PETERS


YOU WILL HAVE FLOODS, FAMINE AND DISEASE, RIVERS OF BLOOD, AND YOU'LL PERISH IN A RAIN OF FIRE FROM THE SKY. HAVE A NICE DAY, KATHY.
THE NOSTRADAMUS HOT LINE
3/27

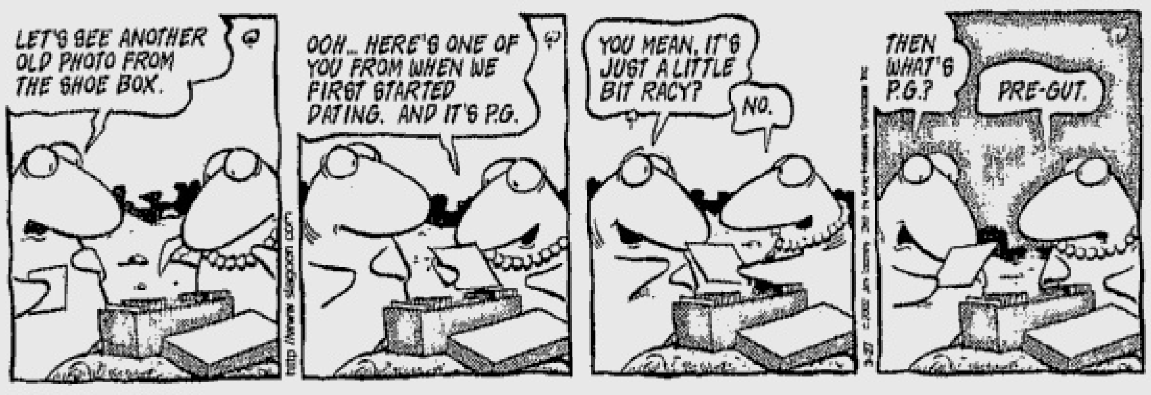
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


HEY, LOOKY! I'VE GOT A FAN LETTER! ..."DEAR SUPER D, YOU MAKE AN AMAZING CARROT. YOUR WIDE RANGE OF EMOTIONS EXPRESSES A DEEP...
...UNDERSTANDING OF THE ORANGE VEGETABLE. BY THE WAY WHO'S THAT FLAT, BROWN BOX SIDEKICK OF YOURS?..."
AAAHH? ME?!! SIDEKICK? BROWN BOX?!!
GIMME THAT!! WHY THAT CREEP DOESN'T UNDERSTAND UNDERSTATED ACTING! FLAT BROWN BOX MY BUTT!
MAYBE YOU'D BE MORE EFFECTIVE AS A CROUTON?

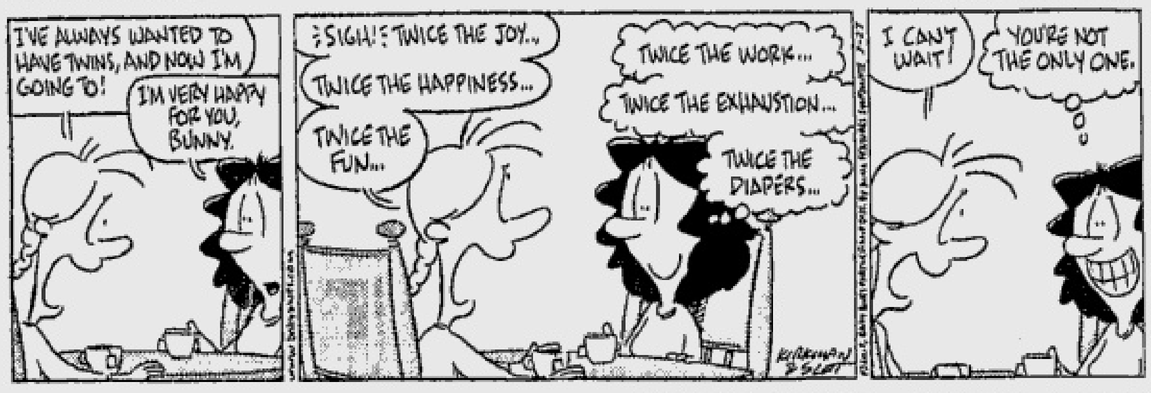
SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY


LET'S SEE ANOTHER OLD PHOTO FROM THE SHOE BOX.
OOH... HERE'S ONE OF YOU FROM WHEN WE FIRST STARTED DATING. AND IT'S P.G.
YOU MEAN, IT'S JUST A LITTLE BIT RACY?
NO.
THEN WHAT'S P.G.?
PRE-GUT.

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


I'VE ALWAYS WANTED TO HAVE TWINS, AND NOW I'M GOING TO!
I'M VERY HAPPY FOR YOU, BUNNY.
SIGH! TWICE THE JOY...
TWICE THE HAPPINESS...
TWICE THE FUN...
TWICE THE WORK...
TWICE THE EXHAUSTION...
TWICE THE DIAPERS...
I CAN'T WAIT!
YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONE.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Quentin Tarantino, Maria Schneider, Sarah Vaughan

Happy Birthday: Social activities will be plentiful this year. Expect your creative abilities to surface. You will be in the mood for love and romance and should take advantage of this. This is not the best year to take financial risks but if you are conservative in your investments you can make gains. Your numbers are 8, 14, 16, 24, 32, 39

ARIES (March 21-April 19): You may have to fight for what you want today. Be quick to utilize your talents and be prepared to go the extra mile. Socially you should make plans to get out and do something lively.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Get involved in activities that will help you expand creatively. You should be able to win the respect of colleagues if you mix business with pleasure.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Things may not go according to plan if you are trying to make alterations to your home. A relative or someone you live with will leave you with added responsibilities.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You will be able to help someone with his or her problems if you tell them about some of your past experiences. Your sensitivity toward others will be appreciated.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): You may have trouble getting others to believe in what you are trying to achieve, but if you are hardworking, you will accomplish your goals without the help of others. You can be proud of yourself and your ability to finish what you start today.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): You will be receptive to the personal problems that a friend is facing. Helping someone else will make you feel good about yourself. Some limitations may occur at work if you try to push your opinions on colleagues.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): You may find it difficult to get along with some of the people who don't agree with your tactics. Follow your gut feelings and you will know that you are on the right course.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): If you've got the time, a pleasure trip will be worth your while. You will discover things that will benefit you in the future. Keep an open mind.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): There will be greater activity in your home that should lead to positive changes. This may be a make-it or break-it time with someone you've been close to.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): The more you listen to others the greater your own knowledge will become. You should have an opportunity to take part in something that will allow you to experience different lifestyles.

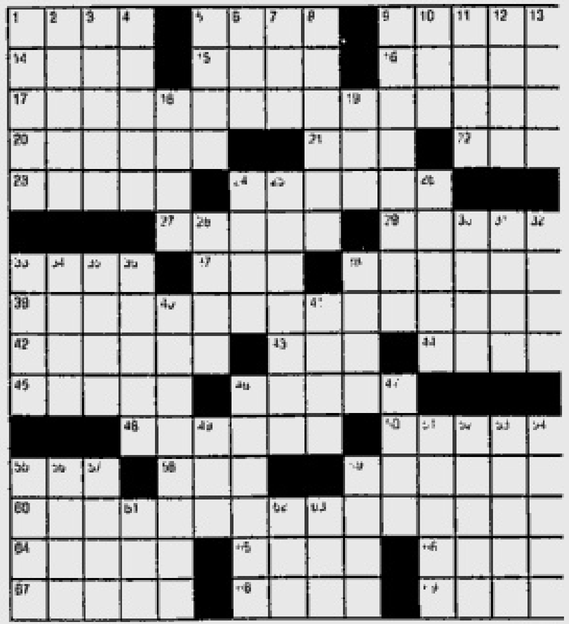
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You should be thinking about your financial picture. A property investment or making valuable additions to your home will be prosperous in the long run.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Someone you like may not be telling you everything. You may have added responsibilities today if an older relative or younger family member needs your assistance.

Birthday Baby: You are friendly and you can easily adapt to environmental changes. You will do well in your life studies. You are curious and can be a real chatterbox. You will love to travel and meet new people.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69

By Verna Suit
Silver Spring, MD

3/27/02

ACROSS
1 Kin partner
5 Was beholden to
9 Comic DeGeneres
14 Land east of the Urals
15 Game on horseback
16 Take off
17 Heston movie
20 Winter wear
21 S-W linkage
22 Draft letters
23 Pile up
24 Greek letters
27 Threesome
29 Wineglass shape
33 Being: Lat.
37 Tarzan on TV
38 Brilliantine
39 Dreyfuss movie
42 Seventh planet
43 Charleson or Carmichael
44 Welshman, e.g.
45 Wing support
46 Ran in place
48 Footnote reference
50 Correct text
55 Cinder
58 "A Chorus Line" number
59 Collectible baby?
60 Flynn movie
64 Horney of psychiatry
65 Maned cat
66 Squat down
67 In the future
68 E-mail button
69 Visualizes

DOWN
1 Phi Beta __
2 Muslim nations
3 Crownlet
4 Quantities of hair
5 Elects
6 Court
7 North Pole worker
8 Spotted
9 Granary adjunct
10 Meadow
11 Indy circuits
12 Holiday precursors
13 Untouchable Eliot
18 Right on maps
19 Grass house
24 Flooring piece
25 Fun trip in a wagon
26 Poisonous shrub
28 Guns it in neutral
30 Fill the hold
31 False god
32 Saucy
33 Ostrich cousins
34 Alphabetize
35 Emulate eagles
36 Tedium
38 Window element
40 Departing
41 Conceal in one's hand
46 Paragons
47 Bambi and Rudolph
49 "The __ of the Sixth Happiness"
51 Sheet changers
52 Come next
53 Bridget to Jane Fonda
54 Secretaries
55 Aleutian Island
56 Pahlavi title
57 __ and now (today)
59 007
61 Bering or Ross
62 Golf-ball position
63 Peter to Henry Fonda

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

M	A	N	I	C	■	G	E	N	T	■	F	A	T	S
O	P	E	R	A	■	E	V	E	R	■	I	L	I	A
A	B	S	E	N	T	E	E	B	A	L	L	O	T	S
S	S	S	■	I	A	N	S	■	C	A	M	E	O	S
■	■	■	A	S	T	A	■	A	T	M	S	■	■	■
A	G	E	N	T	S	■	S	N	O	B	■	F	L	A
I	R	A	T	E	■	P	E	A	R	■	R	I	A	S
D	E	S	E	R	T	E	D	I	S	L	A	N	D	S
E	T	E	S	■	A	L	A	S	■	A	D	E	L	E
S	A	L	■	O	P	E	N	■	A	B	I	D	E	S
■	■	■	S	M	E	E	■	E	B	R	O	■	■	■
E	L	A	T	E	S	■	P	L	E	A	■	S	A	O
V	A	C	A	N	T	B	U	I	L	D	I	N	G	S
A	N	T	S	■	R	O	N	S	■	O	R	I	E	L
N	A	S	H	■	Y	O	K	E	■	R	A	T	S	O

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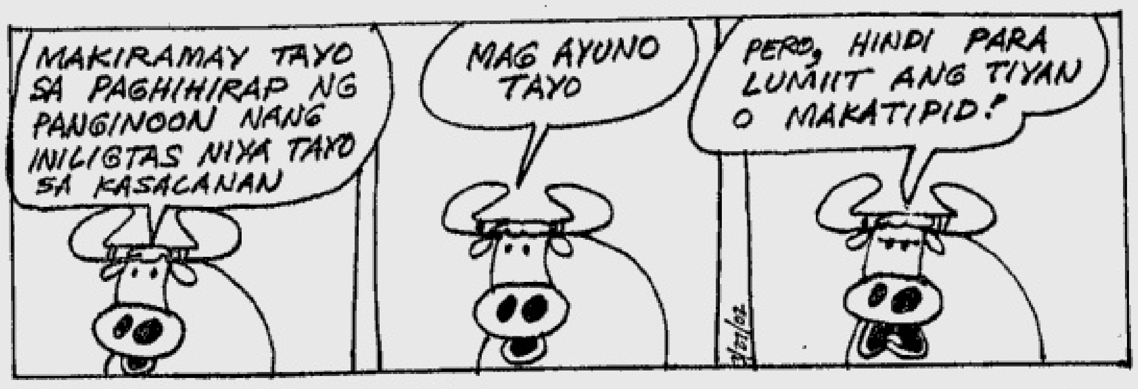
3/27/02

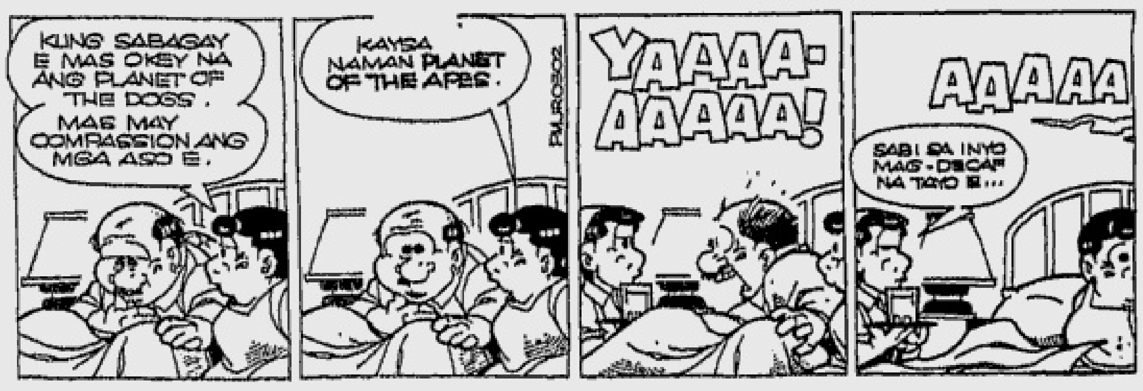
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


MAKIRAMAY TAYO SA PAGHIHIRAP NG PANGINOON NANG INILIGTAS NIYA TAYO SA KASALANAN
MAG AYUNO TAYO
PERO, HINDI PARA LUMIIT ANG TIYAN O MAKATIPID!
3/27/02

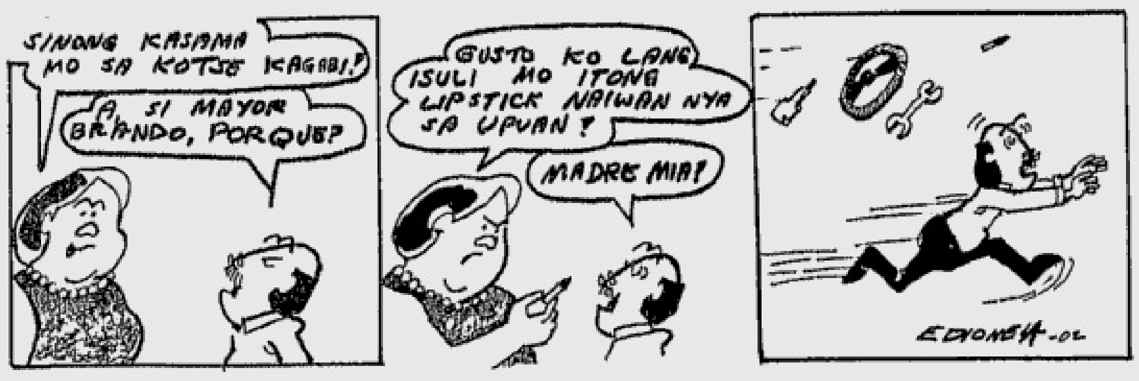
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


KUNG SABAGAY E MAS OKEY NA ANG PLANET OF THE DOGS.
MAS MAY COMPASSION ANG MGA ASO E.
KAYSA NAMAN PLANET OF THE APES.
PMJR0302
YAAAA-AAAAA!
AAAAA
SABI SA INYO MAG-DECAF NA TAYO E...

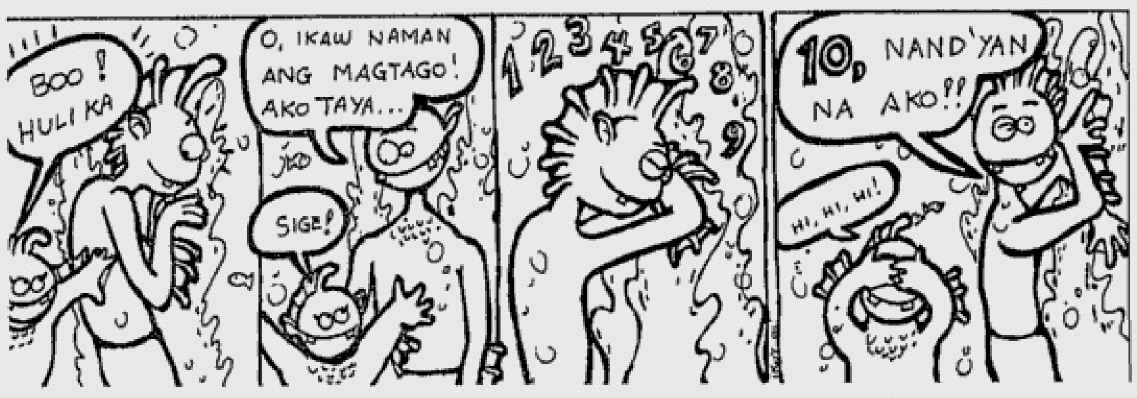
SIMO

BY EDGAR DIONELA


SINONG KASAMA MO SA KOTSE KAGABI!?
A, SI MAYOR BRANDO, PORQUE?
GUSTO KO LANG ISULI MO ITONG LIPSTICK NAIWAN NYA SA UPUAN!
MADRE MIA!
EDIONELA-02

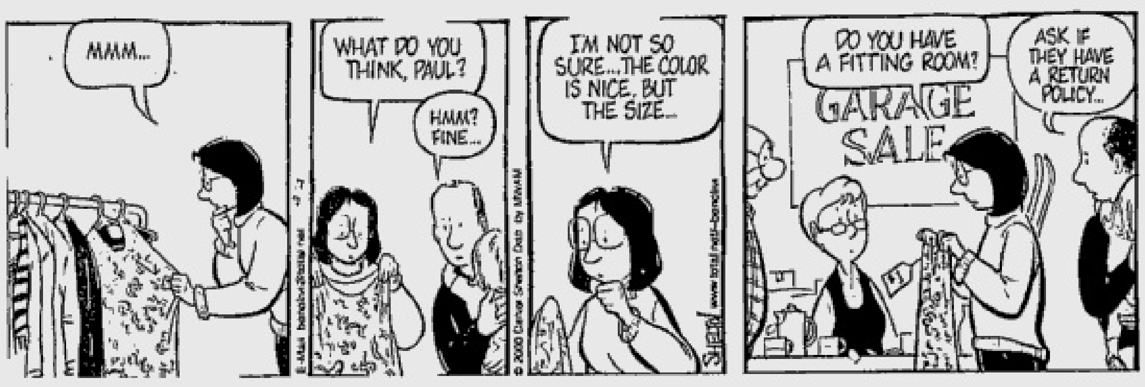
CHICHOY CHOKOY

BY IKOY RICIO


BOO! HULI KA
O, IKAW NAMAN ANG MAGTAGO! AKO TAYA...
SIGE!
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
10, NAND'YAN NA AKO!!
HI, HI, HI!

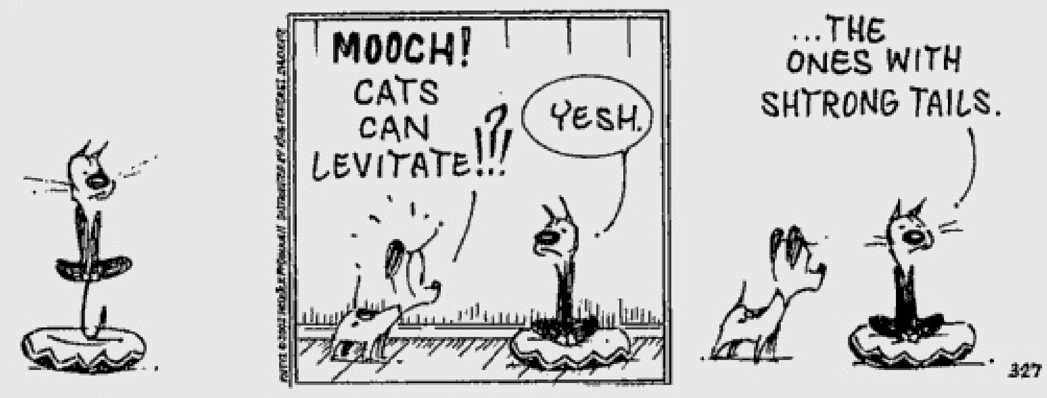
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


MMM...
WHAT DO YOU THINK, PAUL?
HMM? FINE...
I'M NOT SO SURE... THE COLOR IS NICE, BUT THE SIZE...
DO YOU HAVE A FITTING ROOM?
ASK IF THEY HAVE A RETURN POLICY...
GARAGE SALE

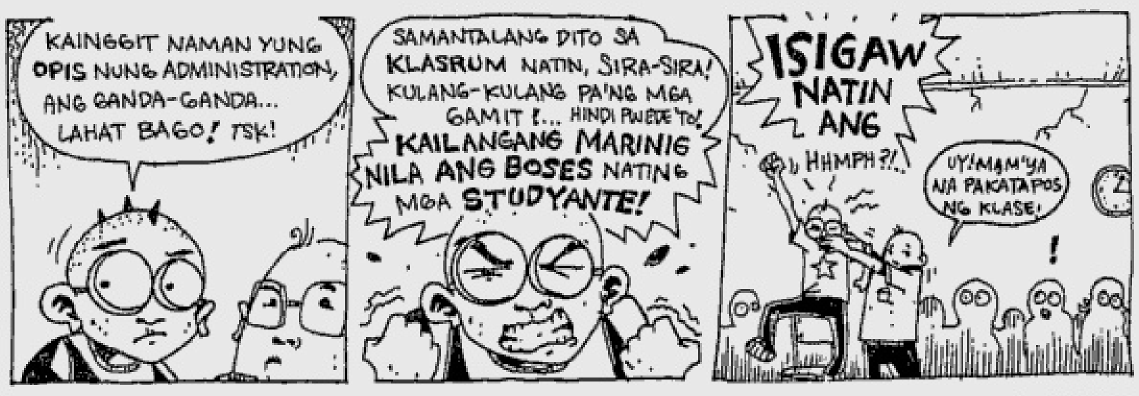
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MOOCH! CATS CAN LEVITATE!!?!
YESH.
...THE ONES WITH SHTRONG TAILS.
327

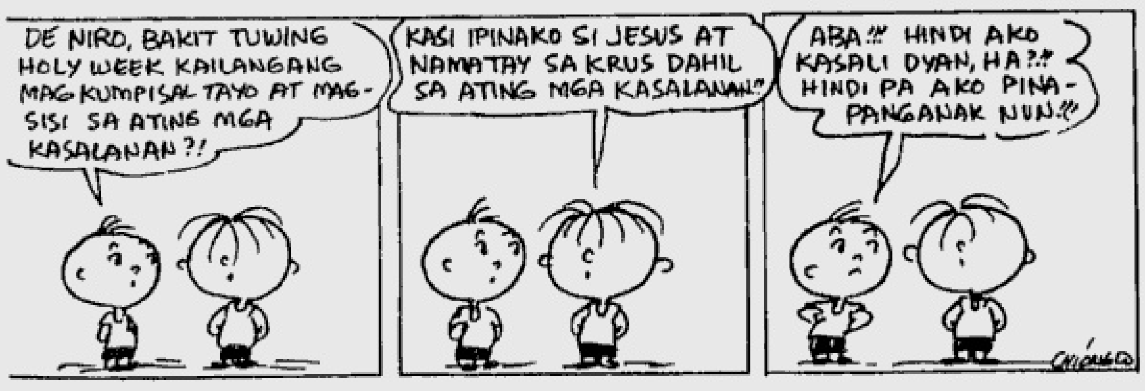
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KAINGGIT NAMAN YUNG OPIS NUNG ADMINISTRATION, ANG GANDA-GANDA... LAHAT BAGO! TSK!
SAMANTALANG DITO SA KLASRUM NATIN, SIRA-SIRA! KULANG-KULANG PA'NG MGA GAMIT!... HINDI PWEDE 'TO! KAILANGANG MARINIG NILA ANG BOSES NATING MGA STUDYANTE!
ISIGAW NATIN ANG
HHMPH?!
UY! MAM'YA NA PAKATAPOS NG KLASE!

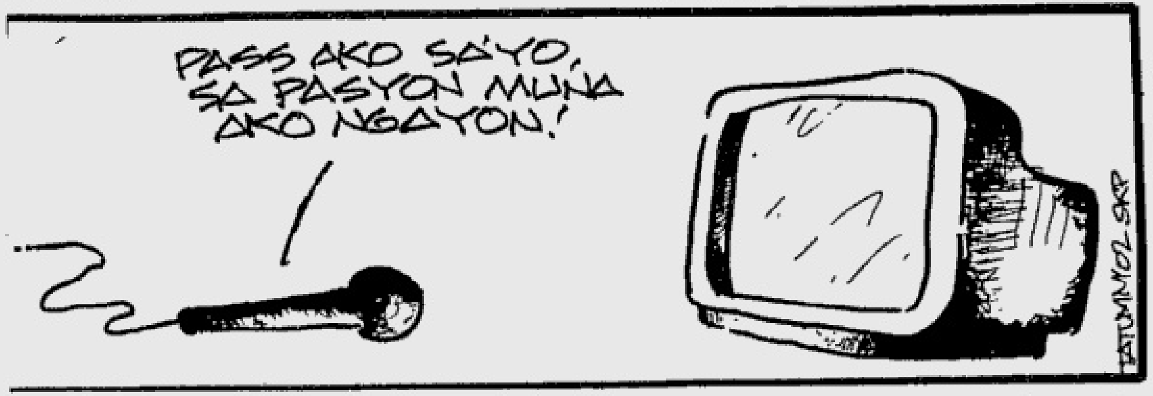
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIRO, BAKIT TUWING HOLY WEEK KAILANGANG MAGKUMPISAL TAYO AT MAGSISI SA ATING MGA KASALANAN?!
KASI IPINAKO SI JESUS AT NAMATAY SA KRUS DAHIL SA ATING MGA KASALANAN!
ABA!! HINDI AKO KASALI DYAN, HA?! HINDI PA AKO PINAPANGANAK NUN!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


PASS AKO SA'YO, SA PASYON MUNA AKO NGAYON!
TATUM/02 SKP

A homebody's to-do list this Holy Week

Pray, reflect, clean up the house, garden, send religious e-mail messages to your loved ones

FOR MOST of us who prefer to stay at home during the Holy Week, the least we could do in observance of the Lenten season is to reflect on our faith since most TV stations are signed off and will not resume until Easter Sunday. Besides reflecting, here are some things home buddies could keep themselves busy with this Holy Week.

Gardening. Time to know your fate. Are you born with a green or brown thumb? Let your plants decide! Be an environmentalist. A shrub can help lessen the pollution in your community and even the world. Maybe you ca also do a little landscaping before you plant your chrysanthemums or your birds of paradise in your backyard.

General house cleaning. Stop the excuses. Clean up the house. I know it's too early for Mother's Day, but don't you love it when you see your mother relaxing while you do the sweeping, mopping, scrubbing, feather-dusting and the dishwashing? You're not only doing this for her but for yourself as well because cleaning can shed off those extra pounds.

Read a book. This is the right moment to finish the book your friend gave you on your birthday. You have just been dying to know how the story's going to end. Sit back and relax because there's nothing going to stop you from reading for the next five days.

Collect and file your photos. Lay out your photos on a photo album. Do a checklist of get-togethers and find out if you have snapshots of them for your file.

Write a reflection journal. You can start by referring to your photo album and see which persons have affected you as a person. Perhaps you will recognize someone who has always been there for you when you need a helping hand but whom you haven't thanked or acknowledged.

Organize your files. The last semester was too busy you hardly noticed that "My Documents" has become as disorganized as your room. You may want to check the files and create folders. Place the lost file in the corresponding folder; e.g. Theology, 2bu!, Chalk, Design Thesis, Reviews, etc. If you are lucky enough to have a CD-writer, you may want to burn them on a CD. This way, you could reformat your hard drive without the worries of having deleted the file you have been saving all your life.

Learn to cook a meat-free meal. Grandma will not always be there to prepare your favorite veggie dish. So, you might want to learn to cook a veggie dish or two at least for the sake of Holy Week.

Design your interior. Rearrange your furniture and your decor. It does not take a professional to make a house makeover. All you need is your imagination.

Recycle. Trash is not always trash. Be extra creative and you can craft miracles out of unwanted materials in your house.

Fix it. Mend not only your broken soul, but also your things at home. Take hold of the screwdriver and start with that busted game pad. You and your brothers have been playing too much with PlayStation and game pads are usually the ones that get destroyed first. The buttons are just stuck up and all you need to do is to give them a shot and try to do a little adjustment. Believe me, I brought one into salvation. That saved my parents a good sum of money.

Go on an e-mail marathon. Since it's Holy Week, you might want to do away with your forwarding of green jokes and naughty attachments. Try sending each soul on your e-mail list a soul-refreshing message about God's unconditional love for humanity.

Rest. This is the surest way to recharge your system after the constant days of study, research and work. There's nothing more rewarding than to have a ,complete eight-hour sleep.

Giles Ivan A. Aquino

E-mail the author at giaquino@edsamail.com.ph

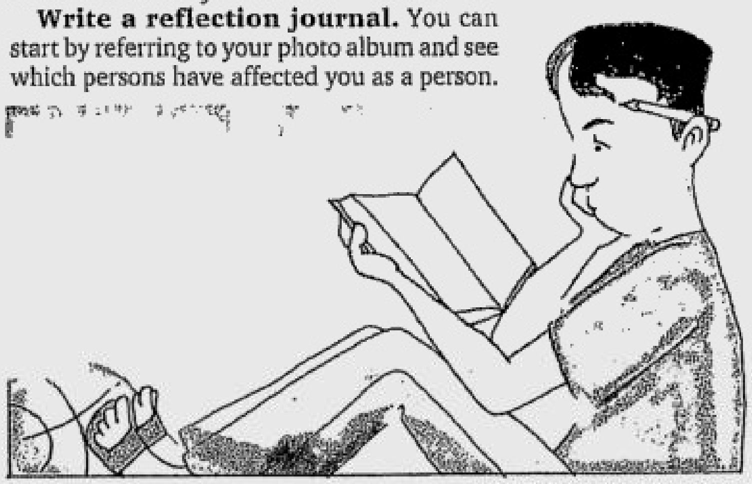


ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT RODRIGUEZ

Crucifixion isn't the only way to atone for sins

By Bunny Anne Gapit
2bU! Correspondent

TRANSLATING Lent into wholly masochistic types of sacrifices isn't really necessary. Spiritual resolutions are not achieved only through grand gestures of penance. Atonement for sins can be made even through simple gestures.

FOR THE PROUD. Remember that we are told to love our enemies. So come off your high horse and extend a friendly hand to your foes.

FOR THE ANGRY. Get rid of your *venganza* list (the roster of people with whom you seek to be avenged) to avoid reopening old wounds. Let go of your anger and leave God to punish bad deeds.

FOR THE ENVIOUS. "Avoid comparing yourself to others for there will always be greater and lesser persons than you are," advises the Desiderata. But a better thing to do is to focus on yourself and "the lesser persons" and don't bother with the "greater ones."

FOR THE GREEDY. Financial difficulties are no reason to cease sharing (ask Robin Hood). When you join the Easter egg hunt, for instance, keep just a few for yourself and apportion the rest to the "egg-less."

FOR THE SLOTHFUL. If you claim to be a voracious reader who can finish a book by Umberto Eco in a few sittings, maybe you should turn to the Bible next. Reading even just a verse or two each night wouldn't be too bad.

FOR THE GLUTTON. Avoid Burger King (pioneer in the "bottomless" glass). Remove "Go Big Time," "Upsize" and "Biggie/Boom" from your vocabulary. Fill the walls of your dining area with images of the grisly/gory/yucky, or better yet, to prick your conscience, of the malnourished children from Somalia. Combine the food you love with what you hate.

FOR THE LECHER. When blood heats up, turn your thoughts to someone guaranteed to dampen your sexual desire. Divert lustful thoughts into other directions and focus instead on other things you can do for penance this season.

Let go of your anger and leave God to punish bad deeds

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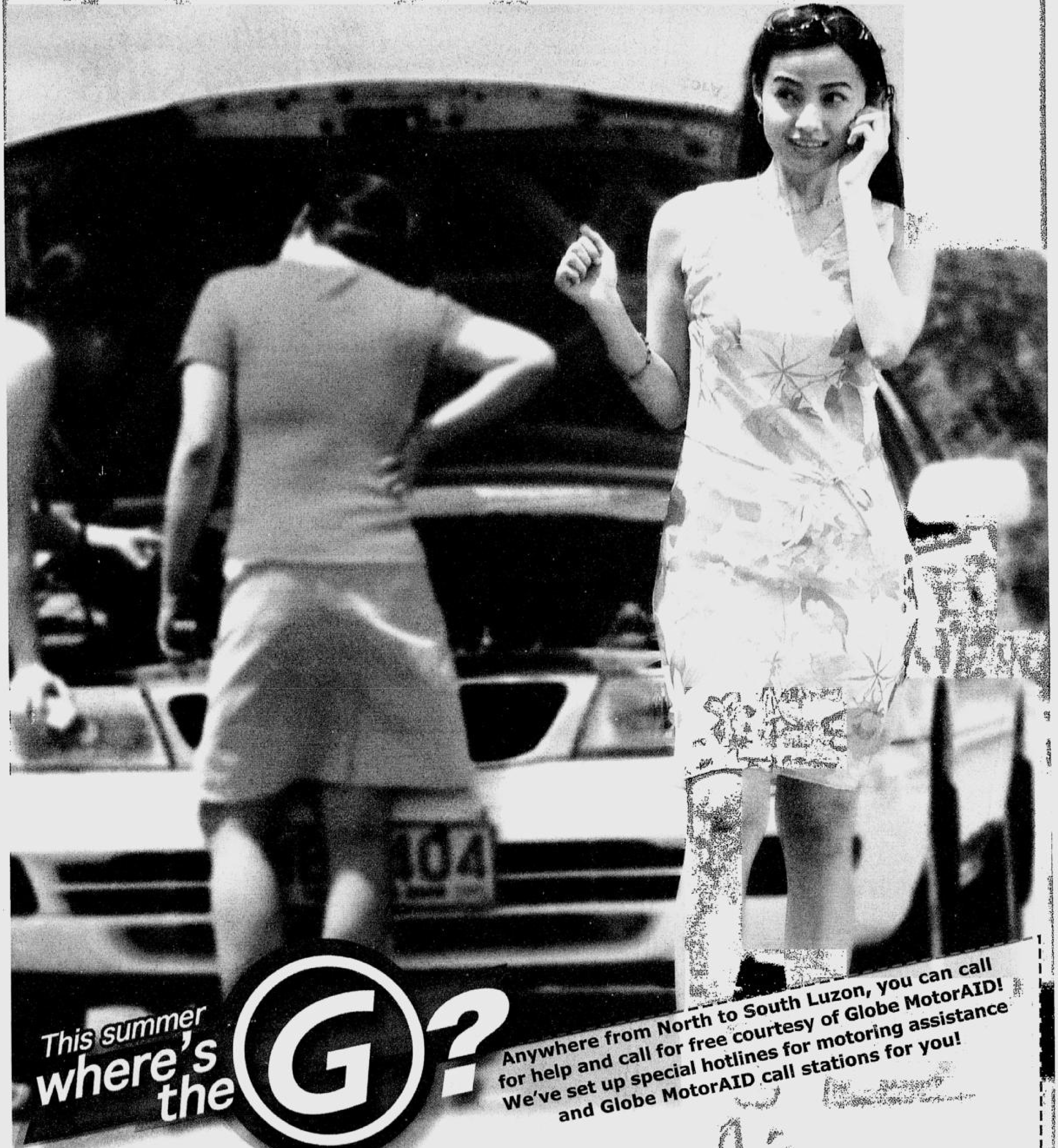

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LIFESTYLE

2BU! SURVEY

What sacrifice will you make this Holy Week?

One little sacrifice can go a long way

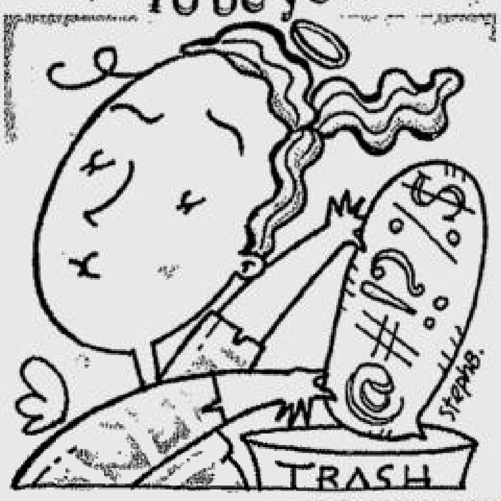

ILLUSTRATION: STEPH BRAVO

By Catherine Young
2bU! Correspondent

FOR A COUNTRY that is predominantly Catholic, it is ironic that Holy Week practices are fading through the years. Nowadays, it is more common to see Pinoys go abroad and enjoy themselves; or stay home and sleep the week away, rather than spend the Lenten season church-hopping with their families.

However, it is great to know that many young people, in spite of this observation, still think of sacrifices or penitence for the Holy Week. Here are some of them:

Staying expletive-free for a week—hopefully I'd get used to it and not say @#!? or $#@% [anymore].—**Suzy, 19, University of the Philippines**

I can't stand fasting so I'll just try not to eat much during the Holy Week.—**Letong, 24**

I'm going to be in China but I'll try to go to confession and resume praying the rosary with my family—something we've recently forgotten because of our crazy diurnal responsibilities. I'll do what I'm told without complaining as well.—**Cher Tiu, 18, Ateneo de Manila University**

It will surely be... my sleeping a lot! I sleep 'til my head hurts *kasi*. I'm [an] insomniac. I sleep around 5 a.m. or even later by 8 a.m. I'll start it *sa* Holy Week *na lang. Tawad na muna ako!*—**Zally A. Almoradie, 19, Manuel L. Quezon University**

I will take time to settle all my unfinished business.—**Lei, 18**

Eat less than what I usually eat. It's a sacrifice for me because I love food.—**Barbie, 18, AdMU**

This may sound less of a feat for a sacrifice, but anyone who has drowned in tears over fear of losing a certain someone will consider what I'm about to say no less than a sacrifice: I will try not to text nor think of this person even just for the Holy Week and see if it can keep my sanity.—**Giles Ivan A. Aquino, 22, Don Bosco Mandaluyong**

I'll listen to the radio's endless playing of "Footprints in the Sand."—**Chikin, University of Santo Tomas**

No coffee for me this Lent. Sacrifice *'yan* for a coffee addict like me.—**Aia, 17, UP**

I'll refrain from eating too much—**Angeline Odelia Concepcion, 18, UP**

Our final exams are going to be after Holy Week, so my sacrifice will be spending extra time (than usual) studying and tutoring people who need help.—**Anne Rose, 18, University of Asia & the Pacific**

Maybe I'll try not to go out and just spend more time with my family. I won't eat meat on Friday and Thursday.—**Kat Yu, 19, AdMU**

No more boredom eating.—**Couch Potato, 18, AdMU**

I've been swearing off ice *buko* and gum for a month but it's not exactly for Holy Week.—**Char, 19**

I'll turn off my phone starting Wednesday. Just until Easter, though!—**Angela, 19, AdMU**

I'll sacrifice my usual activities so I can spend my time with my family.—**Hotlegs, 18, UP**

I will TRY not to eat as much junk and maybe TRY not to text.—**Pammie, 18**

Two Holy Weeks ago, I tried abstaining from texting, but failed. This time, I'll be a good girl, just stay home and spend quality time with the family.—**Arlene, 19**

WHAT SACRIFICE/ p.D3

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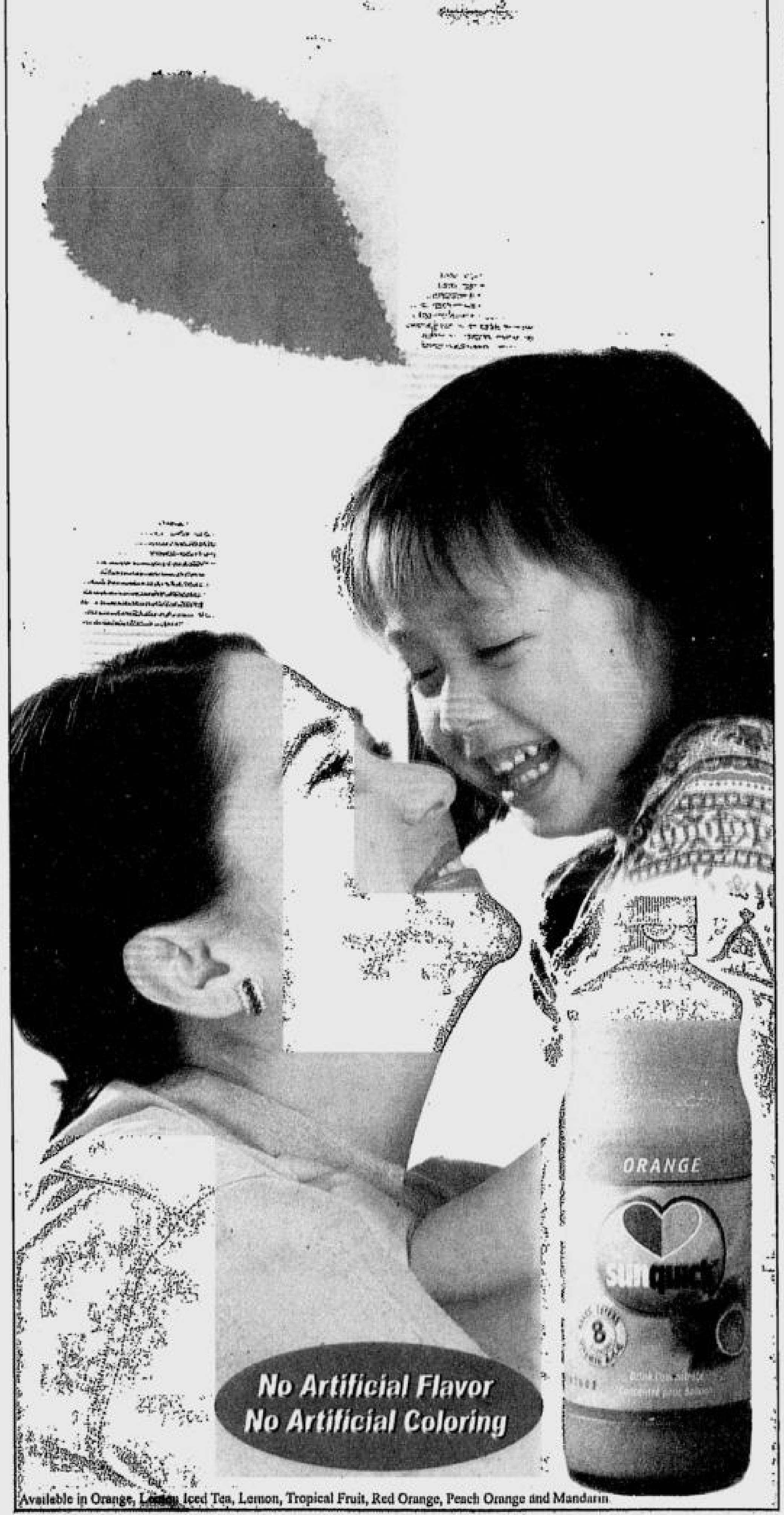

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To get the top 25 Albums for the week available in Tower Records or Music One, just key in **TOP** and send to **209**.

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Download the hottest and the latest music news. Just key in **NEWS ON**. To know what's hot in the music scene, just key in **HOT ON**. Finally, get a schedule of gigs for a specific date by keying in **GIGS <mmddyyyy>**.
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For tones - **TONE <keyword>**
For Picture Messages - **PIC <keyword>**

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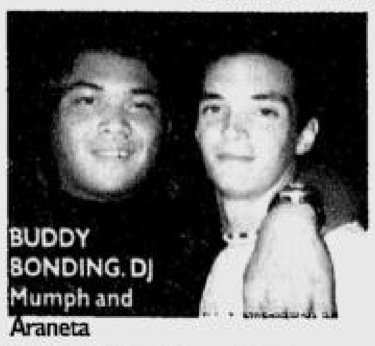
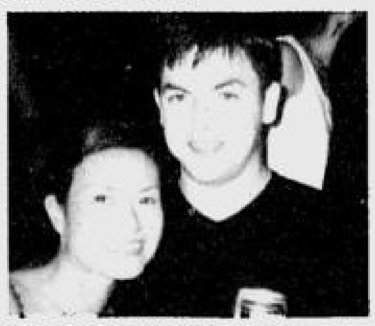


BUDDY BONDING. DJ Mumph and Araneta



SMB SPOTTING. Tanya Sohn and Mike Vaca

GLOBAL GROOVE. Jackie Forster and Marcel Crespo

BOUNTIFUL FISH. Domini and Joanne Primero

Not just another DJ event (Part 2) and more . . .

Yaparazzi
Tim Yap

TO MOST Manila promoters, having the phenomenal dance producer **Chicane** (a.k.a. Nick Bracegirdle) was a dream realized. The costs involved seemed too high and some people thought the city wasn't ready for an event with as huge a production as this act would require. The normal rave would only have the requisite star DJs and stage it in a willing venue (or club, for that matter), fill it up with high-tech lighting and booming sound systems, a bar, some dancers and voila! Pop, then blow—let's party.

But to be able to stage a "Chicane Live" event, one had to bring in the whole team—composed of musicians (a six-piece band), guest vocalists, with a sound, light and video art show directed by Nick Bracegirdle himself—which is a very important element to complement his music. The venue had to be big enough to accommodate dance, club and music aficionados hungry for this kind of scene.

Acclaimed as one of UK's hottest writer-producers since his "Offshore" topped the charts some years back, Sony artist Chicane has since took Ibiza (appearing in countless "beach chill" compilations), and the world by storm. After having worked with industry icons such as BT, Everything But the Girl and B*Witched, his 1999 track "Don't Give Up" featuring Bryan Adams even knocked off Madonna from the No. 1 charts. His first album, "Far from the Maddening Crowds" is a collector's item.

Last Saturday, Smart and MTV held hands with Big Fish, that tenacious club scene promoter's crew along with Joey 92.3, Axe and Casino Filipino (whose amphitheater near the Naia airport became the lucky venue)—to cause major traffic and excitement jams. All roads the past weekend lead to "Chicane Live," where the city's eager partyphiles knew better than to miss the most awaited dance event of the season.

Balearic beats

After an hour or so stuck on the road, we reached the venue, hurriedly calling on the former Duty Free's valet service to save us from parking hassles. Thanks to an all-access pass, we went straight to the back entrance of the party hall. We heard the front entry point had become too congested because of the huge throng of revelers who showed up, despite the distance and the prohibitive price—P900 and P500 tickets, making this the most expensive club event this side of town. Tickets were also sold out after a week's worth of announcement. Smart also gave away some tickets to their lucky subscribers.

It was 1:30 a.m. and I spotted Swatch savvy VJ **Sarah Meier** backstage. "I'm going to present Chicane wearing my *tsinelas*!" I went straight to the dance floor and saw Big Fish senior partner **Tuck Cheah** (known to us as DJ TC—he being the one responsible for global DJ tie-ups—way to go TC!)-taking the reigns on the turntable, providing the right appetizer for the main musical course. Everybody, as in everybody (5,000 plus revelers easily) in this party-loving city was there to be counted. Dancers up in pedestals came in the form of scene movers—real people who knew how to groove—all inducing more electricity to the event.

At exactly 1:45, a vision appeared. A white-clad figure in the form of scene shaker **Faith Amigo** gyrated under the spotlight. It then disappeared. Lights up, and the crowd went crazy, raising their hands, voices and bodies—Chicane was in the house! Mass hysteria peaking, fists up in the air with every percussion beat and soothing vocals later, the audience was placed under his "balearic housy trance" spell. Images of Ibiza, the sound of the sea and the cool breeze of the beach wind came to my mind as I experienced the group's performance. I even know of a couple who chose Chicane's music for their wedding march.

"Listening to Chicane makes me feel like I'm traveling the world," said Malate file **DJ Montano**.

"His melodic dance floor pizzazz has a sense of motion, of a journey—Chicane's magic moves everyone," said party PR **Tina Tinio**.

"His set was too short—*bitin*!" some scenesters complained.

Chicane shall return

Chicane is that rare artist—he elicits a very emotional response from his audience, a simply amazing sensory overload of goosebump-inducing melodies and hard core visual elements, as Yaparazzi had witnessed in what had been dubbed this early as "the dance event of the year."

"We just want to prove a point—that dance music rocks and it is here to stay!" said Big Fish mover **Domini Primero**, who acknowledges the full guiding force of the Big Fish wives **Joanne Primero** and **Pixie Cheah** in the success of the event.

After our exclusive interview session and photo-ops, we invited them back to Manila, even adding on Boracay as an added sales pitch, to which they greeted back with a warm response. "We definitely have great news to bring to the world about your beautiful country, we will come back."

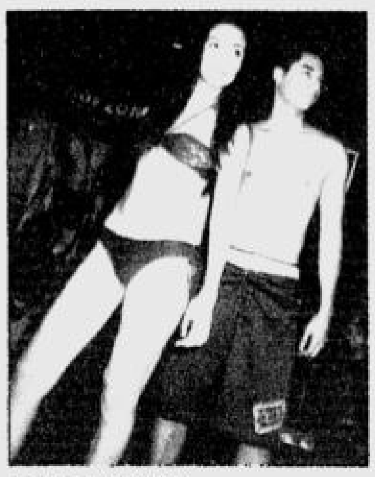
To the people behind this momentous event, take a bow.

SONY artist Chicane (a.k.a. Nick Bracegirdle) at play

A FUSION of dance music for a sensory experience

PHOTOS: TIM YAP

G SUMMER spot—Boracay



WEAR sunscreen.

FLAUNT it, baby!

Bounty of beach parties

SOAK up on your San Miguel to get that perfect tan this summer.

THE OTHER week, Studio 23 mover Edge Pamute rocked the scene like no other to launch the new season of the titillating TV series "Temptation Island 2." With a swimsuit fashion show sponsored by Rejoice happening on West Drive Street (facing Venezia and Buddha Bar) featuring the talents of TAO (Talent Agents Organization) and an all-night percussion and Latin house party, it was totally "wet, wild and wicked!" (More about the event, next week in this space.)

This week, all beach bums and partyphiles hie off to Boracay for the Holy Week party season (how ironic, right?). This time, we see a lot of scene movers battling it out in the name of friendly party competition. Tonight, Manomission, that yearly summer feat of NBK DJs starring Manolet Dario starts the festivities, with a sunset session at Cafe Cocomangas onward to the evening party set at Cocomangas Shooter's Bar.

Thursday, still on Bora island, it is a pick between the Manomission party series—sunset happening at True Home, and evening shebang at Hey, Jude!—and Wherelse? as unstoppable Marcel Crespo brings in Supa DJ Dmitri of D'lite at Beachcomber Disco. This Globe Telecoms event brings DJ Dmitri, popular for his "Nights at the Playboy Mansion" chill mixes. "We have events all over the Philippines, bringing the G mark of fun in the summer sun!" said Em Lingao, Gentxt prime mover.

Saturday, San Miguel Beer's "Sarap to Sundown" party fare brings the MTV event Slinky to Hey, Jude!, with Big Fish crew securing 1,000 sq m of prime beachfront. On the other end of the white shores, Manomission holds court at Cafe Cocomangas (for sunset) and Beachcomber (main event). My, oh, my, what an Easter this will be.

Tim Yap

"TEMPTATION ISLAND" ON STUDIO 23. Rejoice! Swimwear by Tabu, models by TAO

Road-tested items: From anti-cellulite lotion to pressed powder

Make-Over 911
Kinny Salas

I ATTENDED a party recently and upon introducing myself, I was besieged with inquiries on why I have not featured any new road-tested products. Apparently, this is a big favorite among my readers. Once again I would like to remind you to buy only the items you need. If you are currently using a product, which you are happy with, stick to that and forget buying what I road-tested.

Nivea Skin Firming Lotion with Q10. Ad says: "visibly firmer skin in six weeks" and "with exercise virtually unstoppable!" Glamour magazine featured it as an anti-cellulite lotion. I was very skeptical at first but PMS and flabby thigh problems seemed to attack on crucial events. At P170, it was cheap enough to try. What's the big deal with Q10? This co-enzyme, like collagen, occurs naturally in the body and gets depleted as we get older and it is responsible for making our skin supple and youngful-looking. How can it eliminate cellulite from skin? It carries fat into muscle and other body cells so it can be burned off as energy. Results: Skin got smoother and the appearance of cellulite diminished. There was this waxy coating on my skin left by the lotion, which made my skin feel silky and firm. I would stomp the leg with no lotion and the one with and there was definitely less jiggling on the latter. What this will not do, however, is visibly reduce the size of the flabby area. So if you are thinking no more diet and exercise—forget it! This will only enhance the effects of hard work. This is best for thin women with cellulite—but depending on the severity of cellulite, as it will smooth out some but not all. If you have very little, it's like ironing wrinkles off cloth.

L'Oreal Feria multifaceted shimmering hair color worth P395. Anyone can do a single color application when dyeing hair. The problem with this is that hair can look like a phony wig because the color is too concentrated and there is no effect of movement. Regrowth is also more obvious in a relatively short period of time. There are home-highlighting kits, too, but these are messier, more time-consuming and look like obvious stripes when most of us do it ourselves. The best highlight effect is the one done by beauty salons—the foil method. Highlights are strategically applied and the number of strands is manipulated for the most natural sun-did-it-effect. Feria has come up with the best of both worlds: the closest to foil highlighting in finished effect but applied à la single color. Results: I just swirled the color on my hair from roots to tip and the effect did look like foil highlighting. It does not cover your hair with equal intensity everywhere so regrowth isn't as obvious as single color but there is definite change in shade. In fact, if you choose the right color, you can grow out the color without touch-ups. My colors were Bronze Shimmer and Crystal Brown. My natural hair color is black-brown. For this reason, the main drawback is that it is not recommended for people who have 50 percent white hair because it will not cover evenly.

Shiseido 3 Pressed Powder (Golden Beige) comes with a built-in brush instead of the usual puff. This can actually be applied on bare skin and will leave an almost medium coverage giving the appearance of better skin. Even with foundation underneath it does not cake like most powders do. Golden Beige is suitable for most complexions especially if you have Asian skin. It blends into light to tanned skin so you can use it even when your skin tone fluctuates from summer to rainy season. Tip: For very oily skin, apply with a puff, which is also available at Shiseido shops.

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0314 Series of 2002

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Countdown to 'YOU Summer Break Party'

READY for a different kind of party?

Just as it stands out from other youth-oriented websites, so too will YOU.inq7.net break the stereotypes during the day-long celebration of its formal launch on April 6 at the Glorietta Activity Center. Go to the "YOU Summer Break Party" and you'll find that this is definitely not one of your run-of-the-mill launches and happenings.

YOU is INQ7.net's website for today's youth at http://you.inq7.net. INQ7 Interactive Inc. is the joint online and multimedia news and information delivery company of the Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc.

"One of the things that really sets this launch apart is the sheer scope and magnitude of the event," said INQ7 marketing officer Marilyn Dee.

Dee pointed out that the event offers a wide range of activities catering to different age groups that make up the YOU online community. YOU is composed of three main sections: 2bU!, Cross-Campus and Junior Inquirer.

2bU! captures the spirit of today's youth, while Cross-Campus focuses on the campus scene and the concerns of high school and college students. Junior Inquirer caters to grade school students and talks about the interests of these future adults.

To kick off the celebration on April 6, YOU will hold a kiddie parade. The parade will start from the Glorietta 4 entrance at 10 a.m., after which the performers will take center stage at the Glorietta Activity Center for the circus show. Kids will also get the chance to unleash their creativity in a coloring contest, with gift certificates from T.G.I. Friday's up for grabs.

After the parade, winners of the Philippine Schools CyberFair contest will be announced. This school-based, collaborative project encourages community-building and immerses schools and students in the virtual world.

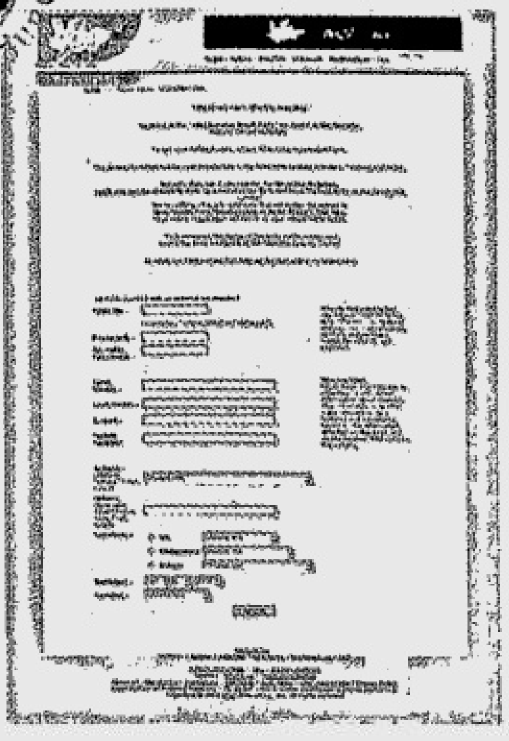
Then, several teams will compete in the interactive E-mazing Race, which will take them through the length and breadth of the Glorietta mall and even into cyberspace. The contestants will have to overcome different mental and physical challenges to find clues and discover their next destination.

Afterward, a fashion show by YOU and Sari-Sari will showcase the latest trends for the youth. The models are all students and amateurs, showing off fashion statements inspired by the YOU site.

Then dance to the music of two of the country's most popular bands, Rivermaya and South Border.

A host of other surprises and freebies also await you throughout the day-long celebration.

To get your online invitation to the "YOU Summer Break Party," just log on to http://you.inq7. net/register/ and fill out the registration form. Not only will this serve as your online passport to the event, but it will also be your virtual raffle ticket. YOU will raffle off a gift certificate that will entitle the winner to one-month free membership at RCBC Plaza's The Spa. YOU will announce the winner and award the prize on April 6 at the Glorietta Activity Center.



What sacrifice will you make . . .

From page D1

Siguro di ako kakain nang marami at magre-reflect and renew my relationship with God."—**Fritzi, 17, UP**

My sacrifice would be not watching TV and finish reading some books instead.—**Lester Leyva, 20**

Absolutely no sweets for me!—**Ginger, 19**

E-mail the author at unicorn@csi.com.ph or cathy_young1@yahoo.com

Mama spent the best years of her life caring for you.
Isn't it time you return the favor?

Give her the best care available.

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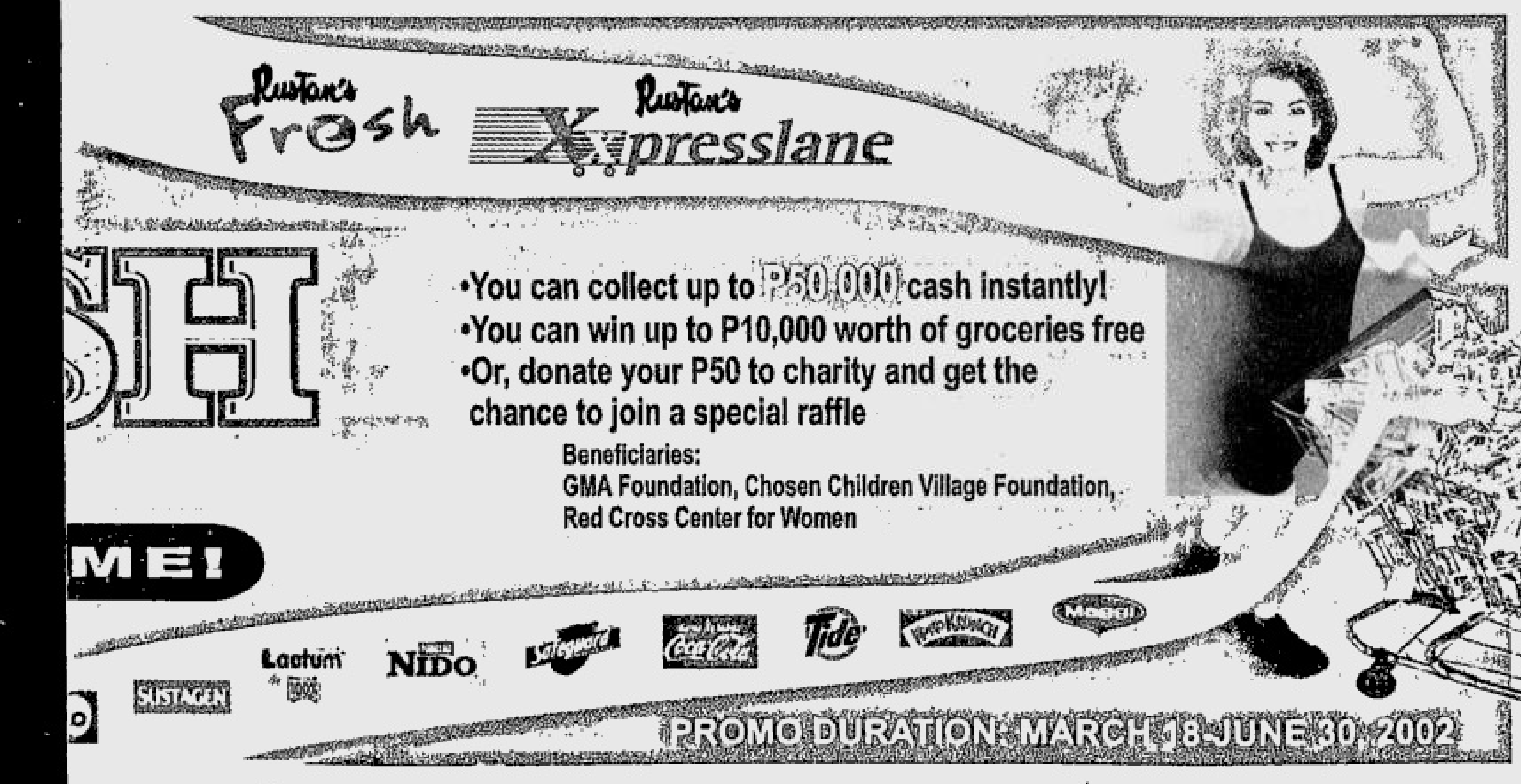

Rustan's Fresh
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Beneficiaries:
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PROMO DURATION: MARCH 18-JUNE 30, 2002

SH
ME!
Sustagen
Lactum
Nido
Coca-Cola
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Maggi
when you shop everytime a more punches the more you shop the more chances of winning in the DASH and CASH for Rustan Supermarket when you buy more participating products. Entitles you to FREE groceries

MECHANICS:

- Get your **FREE DASH for CASH** cards everytime you shop at any Rustan Supermarket or XxpressLane branch
- Your number of punches will depend on your total purchase. The more you shop, the more punches you get.
- You also get **BONUS** punches when you buy participating products with special **"BONUS"** stickers.
- **"WILD CARDS"** entitle you to FREE groceries worth up to P10,000.00.
- Or, you can donate your P50.00 prize to charity and get the chance to win in a special raffle.

Prizes include:
3 TAMASHI colored TV's; 5 Electronic Keyboards; 10 Boomboxes; 10 Princess Coffeemakers; 5 Php 1,000.00 worth of gift cheques from Rustan Supermarkets.

SEE POSTER FOR DETAILS

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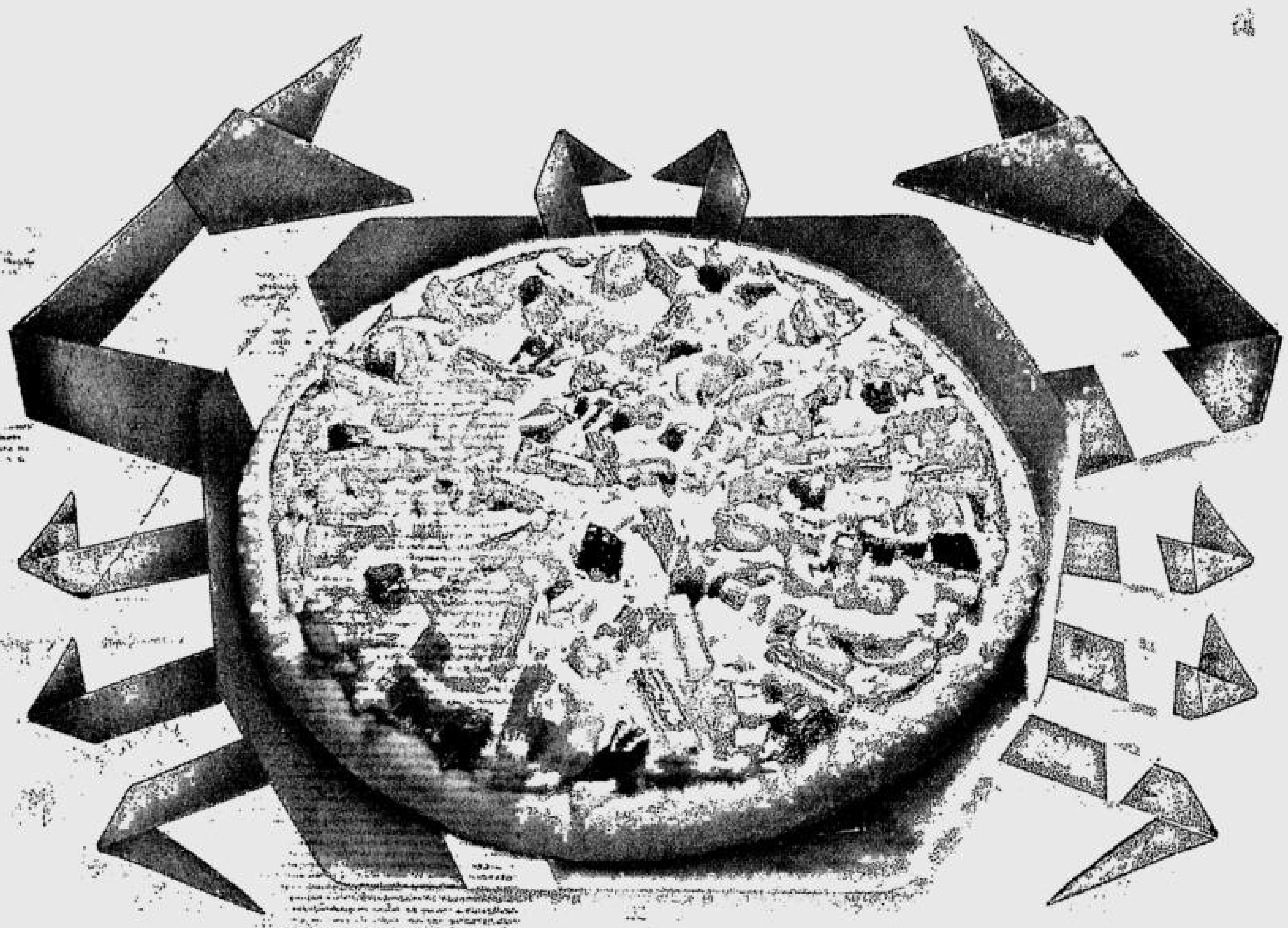
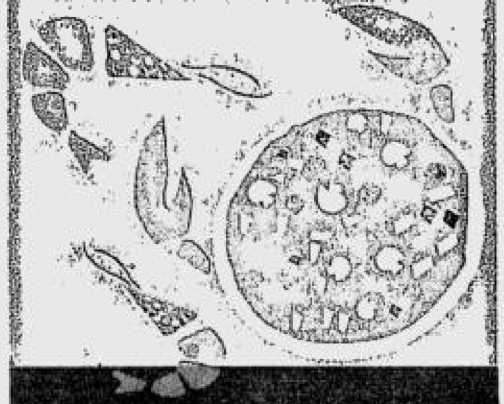


SEAFOOD PRIMO

Dive into the deep sea pleasure of the new Greenwich Seafood Primo. Overflowing with crabsticks, shrimps, and marinara sauce plus chunks of veggies and a hefty mix of mozzarella cheese.



greenwich
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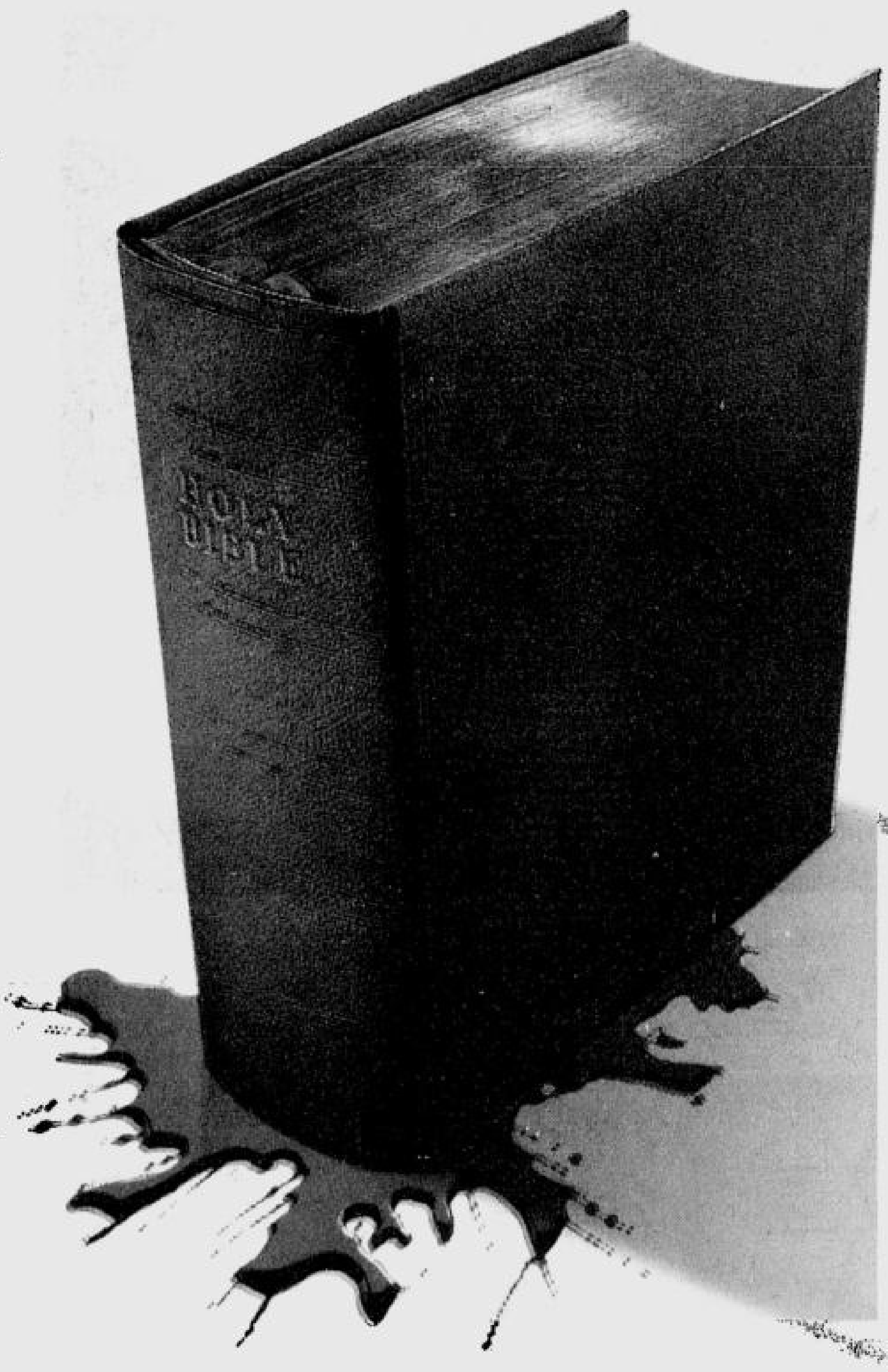
We Serve Sarap.
We Serve Satisfaction.



And the Word was made flesh.

"Lord, by your blood you have redeemed the world."

GOODWILL BOOKSTORE
Your family - friendly bookstore

Palace orders review of Meralco rate hike petition

STORY ON PAGE A2

Crucifixion: Not even the Pope can stop us

ABOUT a dozen penitents, including a woman, will reenact the bloody crucifixion of Jesus Christ on Good Friday, braving nails being driven through their hands and feet as a test of faith—or in this case a repeat test of faith.

None of the volunteers being crucified is a novice to this event, said Zoilo Castro, the head of San Pedro commu-

CRUCIFIXION/A10

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

NO INQUIRER on Good Friday and Black Saturday

YES, INQUIRER resumes publication on Easter Sunday

e-mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Thursday, March 28, 2002 ★ 30 pages / 3 sections / vol.17 / no. 110 P15 website: www.inq7.net

PNP seeks FBI's help

Cops need US expertise to analyze 'mysterious blue powder'

By TJ Burgonio

IT'S A BLUE day for the Philippine National Police.

It has failed so far to pinpoint the culprits behind the series of explosive devices found in Metro Manila and Mindanao in the past 10 days. Yesterday, the PNP requested the help of the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) to determine the contents of a mysterious "blue powder" recovered from the improvised bombs.

Director General Leandro Mendoza, PNP chief, disclosed that explosives experts had found the blue powder inside the dud bombs, and said that FBI's technical expertise was needed to determine "what kind of substance this is."

But the PNP sought to downplay the request for assistance as "ordinary."

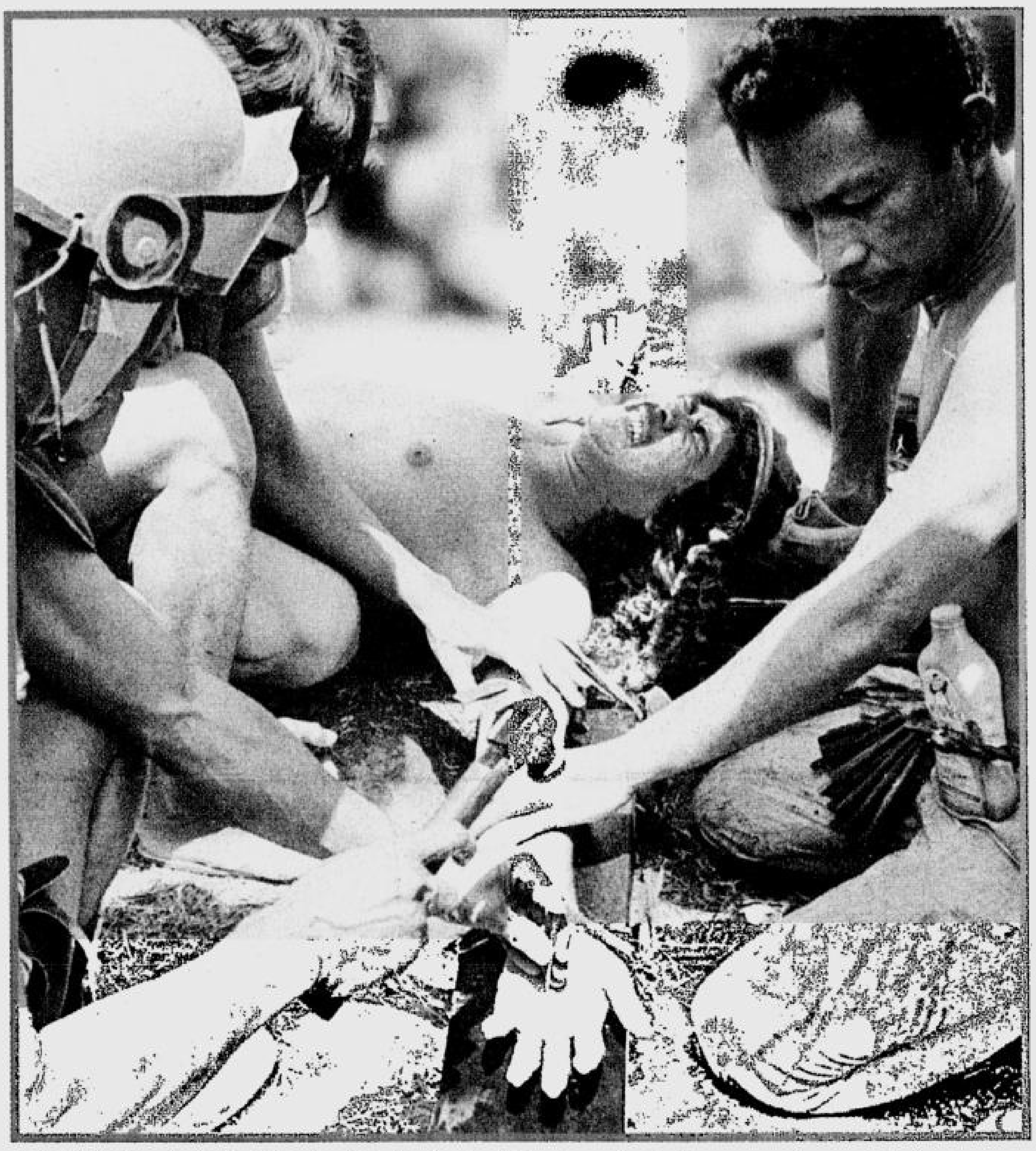
Senior Supt. Leonardo Espina, PNP spokesperson, said Mendoza's move to seek FBI's help in the probe of the bomb scare "is just an ordinary assistance for verification of the blue powder."

He said the PNP has already forwarded a letter of request to the FBI and would send a specimen of the blue powder to the agency anytime this week.

"The FBI is being asked to determine what kind of substance this is, while our very own FED (Firearms and Explosives Division) and Crime Laboratory are verifying it," Espina said in a phone interview.

At the same time, Espina denied speculations that the PNP's FED and Crime Laboratory lacked the capability and equipment to identify the powder. "We just want to make sure (that

PNP/A3



CRUCIFIXION capital of the Philippines in San Pedro, Cutud, San Fernando City, Pampanga, where agonizing Lenten rituals for the Catholic faithful with a "panata (vow)" have persisted for the last five decades. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

Guingona recounts humiliation in Mexico

By Amando Doronila

A DIPLOMATIC *faux pas* victimizing Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona Jr. has stirred up a tempest in the relations between the Philippines and Mexico not seen since the abolition of the Manila-Acapulco galleon trade in the 16th century.

As the tempest raged, Guingona gave a detailed account of the incident to the INQUIRER yesterday in a long-distance telephone interview in Los Angeles while waiting for a flight bound for Manila.

Was he turned away from the table where he had been told by Mexican protocol officers to occupy because US President George W. Bush, who was going to be at the same table, may be uncomfortable in his presence?

Guingona said it was reading too much meaning into the incident to say that he was denied a seat because of his initial objections to the Philippine-American joint military exercises in Basilan.

He attributed the incident to confusion among conference organizers, noting that he had heard complaints from the other delegates about messy preparations.

Guingona recounts that the Mexican government had issued him an invitation to attend the March 21 luncheon reception hosted by Gov. Fernando Canales Carriond of Nuevo Leon state after he had delivered a speech, partly in Spanish, at the plenary of the United Nations Conference on Financing for

GUINGONA/A10

A puzzlement: Why 6,000 troops can't catch 60 Sayyaf bandits

By Donna S. Cueto
and Carlito Pablo

A MEMBER of the International Peace Mission is puzzled why the combined 6,000 American and Filipino troops had failed to round up Abu Sayyaf bandits numbering just 40 to 60 persons in the past few months of Balikatan exercises.

Seiko Ohashi, a delegate from Japan and international coordinator of the Asian Rural Alternatives, said this was particularly disturbing.

Philippine delegate Walden Bello offered an explanation. He said the mission found no "value added" to US military involvement, saying high-tech equipment brought in by American troops have "marginal use when dealing with a political problem like the Abu Sayyaf, which seems to be more hidden by a canopy of corruption and collusion than thick forest."

Bello explained that the peace mission's trip to Basilan had "raised more questions than answers about the US military deployment in Basilan and Zamboanga."

"We are more and more worried

A PUZZLEMENT/A3

400 Filipinos hired to build al-Qaida cells in Cuba

By Christine Herrera
and Blanche S. Rivera

WHO says there's a passport shortage?

Not for 400 Filipino engineers, foremen and construction workers hired by an American company to build maximum security prison cells for al-Qaida terrorists inside the US Naval Base in Guantanamo, Cuba.

Foreign affairs and labor officials facilitated the prompt release of the workers' passports and work permits while the US Embassy provided the visas in less than five days.

The direct hiring of the engineers was allegedly at the request of Washington and coursed through President Macapagal-Arroyo.

It took only two weeks to "clear" the workers after a "discreet and thorough screening" by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and its counterpart, the National Bureau of Investigation, according to sources at the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

The 400 workers left on March 22 for Los Angeles on a plane chartered by the Brown and Root International on their way to Guantanamo, DFA sources said.

But a labor official said 250 construction workers left on a chartered plane on March 25 for Guantanamo. They were hired through Anglo-European Services Inc., a US-based recruitment agency, which has a local partner in the country.

Foreign employers have noted the Anglo-European Services Inc. for the quality of work by Filipino workers hired by the agency.

The workers and their families knew

400 FILIPINOS/A3

'Trauma straight from jaws of hell'

By Sister Victoria Miranda
As told to Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

(Editor's Note. Sister Victoria Miranda is a nom de guerre of a Catholic nun who lived and worked in the communist underground in the 1980s. While remaining faithful to her vows, she took part in the growth of the communist movement. She later witnessed the aftermath of the purge that saw comrades killing comrades.

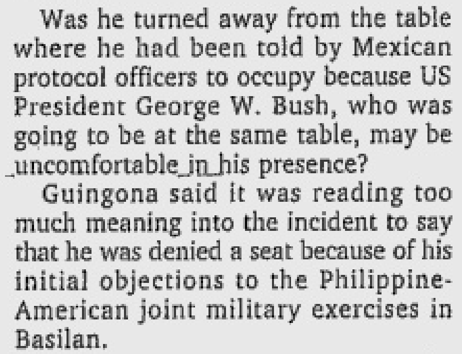
She is now back with her religious community but continues her work among the poor. She describes the revolutionary struggle as the "Pasch of the Filipino people.")

A NUN'S STORY
An I Team *Report*

(Last of three parts)

THE illegal purge and punishment—illegal to the entire revolutionary organization—in Mindanao and (the) Southern Tagalog (region) was caused by a great internal weakness in the organization and the paranoia of a few. I venture to say this of those whom I know, that there was a pathological streak in their paranoia, but the party as leading force did not address such pathologies. The party leaders as well as the rank and file decried the monumental arrogance of a few presumptuous cadres who took upon themselves the heroic task—or so they thought—of saving the party from perdition. Or so, they deluded themselves. That's a summary statement. I'm basing that on the cold hard facts of the case which I was

TRAUMA/A10



HALLELUJAH! THIS IS THE ANSWER TO MY PRAYER!

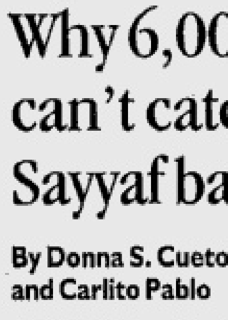
Church in Spain no haven for mobile phones

MORAIRA, Spain—A priest fed up with mobile phones ringing during Mass has installed an electronic jammer to keep his flock in tune with God.

The Rev. Francisco Llopis, pastor of the Church of the Defenseless, said the beeps, tunes and other digital noise emitted by today's omnipresent cell phones are incompatible with

CHURCH/A3

Priests deserve a resting place of dignity



A MISSION to address a grave problem of modern-day apostles.

By Christian V. Esguerra

THE HOLY order of Jesus Christ to his 12 apostles when he sent them out to preach among the people was "to take nothing on their journey but a walking stick—no food, no traveling bag, not a coin in the purses in their belts..."

And there lies a grave problem for the modern-day apostles, the priests. To the end of their days, priests are bonded to a vow of poverty. Who looks after those who labor in the vineyards of the Lord? The Lord Himself said that a laborer is worthy of his hire.

Once the idea to provide a cemetery exclusively for priests took hold of Msgr. Sabino Vengco, it never left him. The idea hit him as particularly urgent whenever he saw old priests sick or dying alone.

"Having lived a life of service to God and the people, these men should die in priestly dignity," says the 60-year-old Vengco who heads the Kapatiran ng Kapariang Taga-Hagonoy (Kakatha), a

PRIESTS/A10

Second FRONT PAGE

PAG-ARALAN MUNA!

Meralco petition ordered reviewed

By Dona Pazzibugan and Agnes E. Donato

MALACAÑANG has ordered a review of the Manila Electric Co.'s petition for an increase in power rates even as a militant legislator called on the Supreme Court to stop the rate hike and Congress to conduct an inquiry.

President Macapagal-Arroyo said yesterday she has asked Energy Secretary Vicente Perez yesterday to make an independent analysis of Meralco's petition.

In Congress, Bayan Muna Rep. Crispin Beltran asked the high tribunal to issue a temporary restraining order against the rate increase.

Beltran said he was preparing a resolution asking the House of Representatives to conduct an inquiry in Meralco's method of computing rate increases.

Ms Macapagal explained that she wanted to see for herself whether Meralco was justified in asking for higher rates.

"Right now I can't give any judgment because I haven't seen (Perez's) analysis," she said.

The Energy Regulatory Commission, the agency that decides on power rates, has yet to act on Meralco's petition.

The President said that while the ERC would ultimately decide the issue, she also wanted to see if the ERC's final decision "would be validated by our own independent study."

The militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan has claimed that electricity bills for residential consumers would go up by as much as 116 percent if Meralco is granted its petition.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao said on Tuesday that Ms Macapagal was willing to ask the Lopez family, the owners of Meralco, to rethink their demand for higher power rates.

During the Cabinet meeting on Tuesday, the President told Perez to make sure that any increase would be "very well-justified."

"We want a full justification of the rate increase and we can't allow any unnecessary increase at this time," Tiglao said.

Beltran said Ms Macapagal should not take at face value Meralco's explanations and that she should first consider the capacity of the consumers to absorb any rate increases.

"I dare Meralco to reveal its genuine statement of assets and liabilities, as well as other financial records so that consumers will be able to gauge whether the company is indeed in need of a rate increase," Beltran said.

Meralco is reportedly demanding a 15- to 30-centavo rate per kilowatt hour hike so it can secure part of a P5.5 billion loan from the Asian Development Bank.

Beltran questioned Meralco's claim that the delay granting the rate adjustments was affecting the company's profitability.

He said the utility company had been making adjusments in the power rates since the Power Reform Act and the controversial Purchased Power Adjustment (PPA) were approved.

Beltran also called on the ERC to make public Meralco's application for "revised power distribution rates," which would reveal the company's computation methods.

"This formula has not been properly explained to Meralco's customers. That's why many of them are shocked every time they get their monthly electric bills," Beltran said.

Meralco is the country's biggest power distributor.

It services the entire Metro Manila and key cities and towns in Bulacan, Cavite, Rizal, Quezon and Pampanga.

Mayor frowns on crucifixions

By Armand N. Nocum

THE MAYOR of the City of San Fernando says that the renowned traditional reenactment of the crucifixion in his city on Good Friday has become "outmoded" but there is no way he can put a stop to it.

Many people would want to maintain the religious practice as a way of repaying God for their blessings, said Mayor Rey Aquino.

"These practices have now become a form of piety although they are no longer in sync with modern practices and have become outmoded," Aquino said in an interview with radio dzMM.

But he said he was helpless to stop the often bloody crucifixions and flagellations because these are an age-old tradition.

"You cannot just prohibit them and expect people to follow," he said.

Despite the Church officials' discouragement of such "extreme forms of piety," Aquino said the practice was likely to go on for a long time.

"Some do it as an expression of gratitude to God for the good that happened in their lives, such as the miraculous cure of a loved one," he said.

He said many have taken a vow to either undergo flagellation or have themselves crucified on every Good Friday for the next seven to 10 years.

"That's their belief which we cannot condemn," he said.

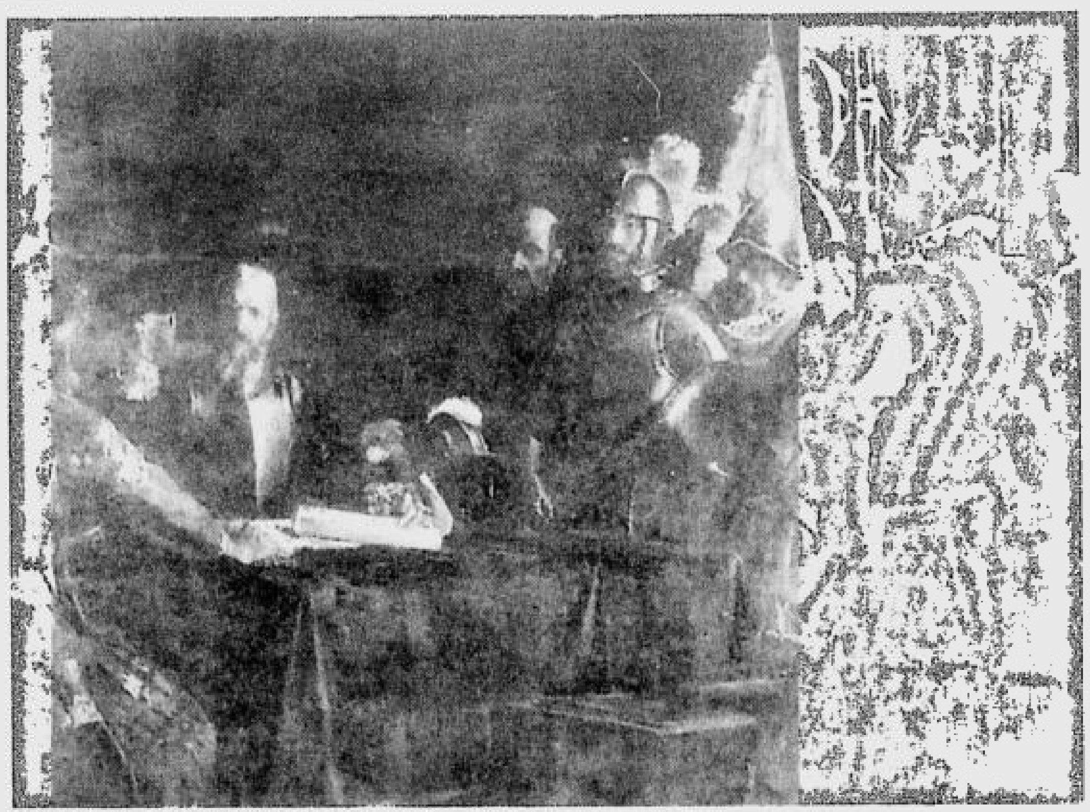
In San Fernando, as many as 1,000 penitents undergo flagellation and about 10 are nailed to the cross. Those who want to be crucified must secure a waiver from barangay officials.

Aquino said the San Fernando local government and businesses earn much from the yearly influx of domestic and foreign tourists who come to observe the Good Friday rites.

But he denied reports that the local authorities pay people to put up a good show.

"As far as I'm concerned, all we are doing is to support (the religious event) with basic services, maintaining peace and order and attend to the medical needs of the penitents," he said.

"Never in my life did we give financial incentives" to the flagellants or to those nailed to the cross, he said.



JUAN Luna's Blood Compact: Deteriorating.

Palace paintings deteriorating

By Dona Pazzibugan

SEVERAL priceless paintings in Malacañang are in bad shape.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said many of the paintings were "deteriorating" and need to be restored soon.

"In fact there were some paintings here that came from the Bangko Sentral; I returned one or two because when I came here, sad to say the paintings are not in good shape," Ms Macapagal said during a luncheon with Palace reporters.

The two are Juan Luna's "Blood Compact" and a portrait of the late President Carlos Garcia.

Ms Macapagal said she returned these paintings to the Bangko Sentral since Malacañang could not oversee their restoration.

Luna's "Blood Compact" will reportedly be brought to Spain to be restored by the Spanish government.

"But the one of Garcia I noticed is also deteriorating, plus many others. Many other paintings need to be taken care of," the President disclosed.

She said she already told art curator Monina Jacinto to take care of the paintings.

Jacinto, however, is still in Hawaii.

"(Since) they cannot be taken care of here, they should be (brought) somewhere where they can be taken care of," Ms Macapagal said.

Hope for Burnhams brighter now—Gloria

By Carlito Pablo

THE PROSPECTS for the rescue of Abu Sayyaf hostages Martin and Gracia Burnham have vastly improved, said President Macapagal-Arroyo even she denied an American cable channel report that a $3 million ransom had been paid for the Burnhams.

The President said the use of sophisticated US military surveillance equipment in Basilan, where US and Filipino troops are jointly conducting the Balikatan training exercise, had helped greatly.

"The information about their location is much better because of improved surveillance," Ms Macapagal told reporters.

The US has reportedly been flying surveillance missions over Basilan from other Asian airfields, aside from deploying unmanned drones and night-flying choppers during the joint exercise.

'Incidental'

The President stressed that the rescue of the Burnhams was "incidental" to the Balikatan which said was "a joint training exercise" of Filipino and US troops.

Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao noted that the number of firefights between government forces and the Abu Sayyaf bandits holding the Burnhams has increased in recent days, an "indication that our forces are closing in on them."

The President let out a hearty laugh when asked whether she expects to see the Burnhams during her Holy Week vacation in Baguio City.

Another US hostage, Jeffrey Schilling, was rescued during Holy Week last year and presented to Ms Macapagal who was holidaying in Baguio.

"That's up to God, divine intervention," Ms Macapagal said. "He makes all things beautiful in his time."

Ms Macapagal also denied the Fox News report that a $3 million ransom payment was made to buy the freedom of the Burnhams.

Fox News also reported that the ransom came not from the government but from "private" sources, and that the payment was facilitated by the US government.

"If indeed a $3 million ransom was paid, why are they (Burnhams) still there?" the President said.

Abu arrests

In Zamboanga City, military sources said yesterday that intelligence operatives have arrested three Abu Sayyaf gunmen in separate raids over the weekend.

Alhamzar Limbong and Yahzi Suwaib were captured Sunday from an Abu Sayyaf safehouse in the village of Talon-Talon near Zamboanga City.

Hatip Habibon was arrested in the town of Sumisip on Basilan island while allegedly on a mission to lay out an escape route for the rebels and their three American and Filipino hostages.

Officials said Limbong and Suwaib each have a P1 million reward on their heads for the kidnapping of dozens of Filipino teachers and students on Basilan two years ago. Both are also wanted for a string of murders. *With AFP*

Harry Stonehill is dead

CONTROVERSIAL American businessman Harry S. Stonehill died a week ago in Spain. He was 84.

Stonehill, who pioneered in the Virginia tobacco industry in the Ilocos region, died at the Clinico, University of Malaga in Spain on March 20.

The late businessman became a sensation during the term of President Diosdado Macapagal in the '60s after National Bureau of Investigation agents raided his offices and found espionage equipment and the infamous "bluebook (which was actually an orange-colored notebook)."

The "bluebook" allegedly contained the names of high-ranking politicians and media men in the businessman's pay for the protection of his huge business empire.

But before Stonehill could be charged and eventually sent to prison for the wide web of corruption exposed in his "bluebook," President Macapagal had him deported.

His deportation caused an even bigger public uproar and the Macapagal administration's public image was tainted, a heavy burden that President Macapagal carried until his defeat by Ferdinand Marcos in the 1965 presidential elections.

HARRY Stonehill looking over the gates of his old Forbes Park home in 1987.

Stonehill was the country's biggest taxpayer when the NBI arrested him. His fortune was even more astonishing since he amassed it only within two decades after World War II.

Stonehill, who arrived in the country as an American soldier, showed his business acumen while still serving in the army by selling government issued rations and Christmas cards in the black market.

When his black market activities were discovered, he was discharged from the US Army.

But Stonehill proved to be a bold and efficient entrepreneur when he built a huge business empire during the post war years.

His business interests included the US Tobacco Corporation, the Republic Real Estate Corporation (RREC), the Republic Glass Corporation, and the Manila Memorial Park, which was the first of its kind in the country.

Stonehill came back in the country in November 1987 and was even featured in the Sunday Inquirer Magazine, with pictures of him inspecting his former properties.

He was again in the news during the late 1990s after the RREC tried to take over the reclaimed land on Manila Bay where the Cultural Center of the Philippines complex stands.

In 1998, the Supreme Court decided in RREC's favor and ordered the government to turn over the land titles of 109 hectares of reclaimed land at the CCP complex to the real estate developer or pay it the property's current value of P54 billion.

The case is awaiting final resolution and execution. ***Philip Tubeza***

'Caloy' kills 27 in Surigao

TANDAG, Surigao del Sur—At least twenty-seven persons were confirmed dead, while three others are still missing, after typhoon "Caloy" hit the province on Thursday last week.

Of the casualties, 16 were residents of San Miguel town.

The provincial disaster coordinating council said the typhoon displaced some 10,754 families from the province's 10 towns.

Residents of Barangay Libas Sud were still unable to return after their houses were buried in mudslides triggered by a tornado.

As of press time, power lines were still down in Carrascal, Cantillan, Madrid, Carmen, Lanusa and San Miguel towns, while a Smart Communications facility in Tandag town remains non-functional.

The Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) Chapter here said the death toll increased after three more bodies were recovered in Lingig town.

The victims were onboard a fishing boat along with 20 others, when huge waves battered and sunk their vessel in Hinatuan town.

One of those who survived and was recovered by a Japanese vessel is still in Japan, but officials said he would be returned to the country on March 31.

'Tis no time to watch TV

By Armand N. Nocum

HOLY Week is not a time for people to simply stay home and watch religious films on television.

During the week, especially today's Maundy Thursday, Catholics are encouraged to go to confession and hold vigils in the churches to accompany Christ in his sufferings.

Today, the Christian world recalls the Last Supper and Christ's washing of the feet of his 12 Apostles before his arrest and betrayal by Judas Iscariot.

"The essence of Holy Thursday is the Mass of the Last Supper. We commemorate the institution of the Eucharist and the priesthood," said Msgr. Hernando Coronel, secretary general of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines.

The day starts with the Mass of the Chrism, officiated by the bishop and attended by all the priests, in which they all renew their priestly vows.

What lends significance to this year's Chrism Mass is the reading of a letter from Pope John Paul II condemning the priestly scandals in the United States, said Coronel.

Gloria: It was envoy's job to check with Erap's doc

By Carlito Pablo

AMBASSADOR Albert del Rosario has the full powers to represent the Philippine government in asking Joseph Estrada's knee surgeon in the US to come here and treat the deposed leader.

President Macapagal-Arroyo thus defended the Philippine ambassador to the US, whose authority in dealing with Dr. Christopher Mow of the Stanford University Hospital is being questioned by Estrada.

Ms Macapagal said it was part of Del Rosario's responsibility as envoy to "verify" claims by the Estrada camp that Mow cannot possibly come to the Philippines and perform the needed knee surgery on Estrada.

"The DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs) and DOJ (Department of Justice) are representing the government," Ms Macapagal said.

"As ambassador, he does not need to ask permission for every move he makes," the President said of Del Rosario's efforts to convince Mow to come the country.

Estrada has petitioned the Sandiganbayan to allow him to go to the US for his knee surgery, citing his right to choose his own surgeon, particularly Mow.

The American doctor has expressed willingness to come to the Philippines under three conditions: ample security for him, that he will not be asked to testify in any manner before the courts, and that Estrada is amenable to such arrangement.

President Macapagal noted that the possibility of having Mow come over was one of the arguments posed by the DOJ in its opposition to Estrada's motion for authority to leave the country.

"When Erap was petitioning for going abroad, the DOJ was studying whether the doctors can come here," Ms Macapagal said. "That was one of the arguments by the DOJ in its opposition."

Hence, Del Rosario's acts were part of "operational matters" required in the government's pursuit of the Estrada cases, the President said.

Ms Macapagal, however, claimed that she hasn't personally talked with Del Rosario about getting Mow come over.

She noted that she exercises only "strategic supervision" over her officials in government.

Her spokesperson, Rigoberto Tiglao, noted that the government needed to find out whether Mow cannot treat Estrada as being claimed by the latter's camp.

Mom of 'greatest genius' fights for custody of son

DENVER—He was proclaimed the "greatest genius to ever grace the Earth." With a purported IQ of 298, he was taking college classes when most children his age were starting grade school.

But 8-year-old Justin Chapman's genius is in doubt after his mother admitted faking some of his test results. The boy has been put in foster care after what was thought to be a suicide attempt.

And his mother is now fighting for custody of her son.

Elizabeth Chapman, 29, is hoping social workers will recommend at a hearing April 12 that custody be returned to her. Her parents and the father who has not seen Justin since he was 2 are also believed to be seeking custody.

The boy has been a celebrity since age 3. But things began to fall apart last month after reporters examined his purported accomplishments and the role of his mother.

Chapman admitted she fabricated most if not all of her son's top achievements: a perfect 800 on the math section of the SAT, the aptitude test used to rate college applicants; a genius score at age 3 on the Wechsler Intelligence Scale test, and an IQ score of 298-plus on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale at age 6.

"I just got caught up in it," she told the Rocky Mountain News, which broke the story along with The New York Times. "I wanted to be a good mom and give him opportunities I didn't have. I don't do anything halfway. It was wrong. I made some poor choices."

Laura Brody of Johns Hopkins University's Center for Talented Youth said Justin's mother sent his SAT scores in 2000. She believed the scores mostly because his two IQ scores were high.

"I find it difficult to understand how a mother can think this helps her child," Brody said.

Chapman, 29, avoided trial on abuse and neglect charges by admitting she created an "injurious environment" for Justin.

What that might mean is not clear, since Chapman and her attorney refused to comment. Hospital workers who treated Justin after his mother feared he took too many Motrin pain reliever pills in November said he hid under furniture when he could not answer some of their questions. (The boy told investigators he took only one Motrin.)

University of Colorado psychology professor Don Weatherley said Chapman may be a "stage mother," or someone who projects her identity onto her children and does not accept the youngster for who he really is.

"He may be subject to some major disillusionment and disappointment," Weatherley said of the boy.

Last summer, Chapman and her son moved to a rented house in a middle-class subdivision in suburban Broomfield so Justin could be treated for a hearing problem in Denver. Chapman was a gymnastics teacher until she broke her arm, and it is not clear how she is supporting herself now.

In the fall, Justin reportedly began to throw tantrums after being enrolled in a private school for gifted children. After he was hospitalized, mental health workers concluded he was fantasizing about suicide, according to records cited in news accounts.

A neighbor, Charlene Kociuba, said she believes Chapman stole her 16-year-old son's SAT scores. She said she once saw Chapman prep Justin for an IQ test by quizzing him as if he was on the television show "Jeopardy!"

She said Justin was rarely allowed to play outside by his mother.

"When he wanted to be a kid, she didn't like it," she said. *AP*

PNP seeks FBI's help

From page A1

this is properly identified)," he said.

Mutual agreement

According to Espina, there's a standing mutual agreement of cooperation between the PNP and the FBI "in case the need to verify such things arises."

While he was not aware of Mendoza's decision to seek FBI's help in the probe of the bomb run, Deputy Director General Rex Piad, chief of the directorial staff, voiced support for the move.

"If it's outside the capability of our crime laboratory, we'll seek help of other agencies in determining such substances," he said.

Mendoza said the powder did not contain ammonium nitrate which was the main ingredient used in the bomb that destroyed an Oklahoma building in 1995.

Several bombs consisting of ammunition, electrical wiring and a timing device have been found in nine different parts of the metropolis and in Cotabato City and Davao City. While the bombs were not designed for detonation, they have triggered a mild panic.

Mendoza also said that the police have identified the members of the shadowy group claiming to be behind the bomb scare.

Verifying existence

"We have the names already. The group surfaced in December last year when they planted a 'hoax bomb' in Cotabato. There was an investigation conducted, and there are some names uncovered, who are behind this particular army," he told reporters.

But Mendoza was quick to add they were still verifying "whether these people are existing or not."

A group calling itself the Indigenous People's Federal Army (Ipfa) has claimed responsibility for planting the bombs in public places, including stations of the Metro Rail Transit.

Intelligence officials are not discounting the involvement of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Moro National Liberation Front and forces loyal to ex-President Joseph Estrada.

They noted that these groups had reasons to destabilize the government because their leaders, Moro rebel leader Nur Misuari and Estrada, are currently detained while facing criminal charges in court.

Mendoza also said that the police have not established if a suspected MNLF member who was arrested in Payatas, Quezon City, on Tuesday morning had anything to do with the bombs found in the metropolis.

"We have no conclusions yet," he said.

Police and military agents arrested Eleno Akmad Umpar, 20, a vendor from Marawi City, and seized from him a .38 Armscor revolver during a raid on his home in Payatas.

The agents secured a warrant to search his home after receiving intelligence reports that he was in possession of a firearm. Police denied speculations that the raiding team was after a bigger catch.

400 Filipinos hired to build al-Qaida . . .

From page A1

they were being accorded special treatment. "The hiring has the blessings of the President and the White House so why will the workers worry?" said one source. The workers were not subjected to tight security check at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Special rate

They were also given a "special rate" of $7 an hour, above the minimum wage of $5.25 an hour in the United States, or a take-home pay of $1,456 a month. Sources said the rate for the 10 engineers and foremen was "more than five times" their pay in the Philippines. Their contract is good for four months.

They will get free accommodation, full benefits in case of accidents, and food, although the OFWs reportedly brought with them native delicacies like shrimp paste, noodles and sweets when they left.

The source at the labor department said the Philippine Embassy in Washington phoned the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration last week to facilitate the papers of the 250 engineers and workers for a "secret mission" in Cuba.

But a DFA source said the request for the "secret mission" came from the White House and was coursed through President Macapagal.

Why the secrecy?

"The US and Philippine governments wanted this direct hiring as low key as possible. We want to treat this as a simple employment opportunity," one of the sources said.

Another official interviewed by the INQUIRER asked that the story be withheld for "national security" reasons.

"We want this low key because we don't want to offend our Muslim brothers. It might cause friction. They might take offense and fan dissent because our workers will build maximum-security prison cells for the Taliban and the al-Qaida members," the official said.

Gadhafi a friend of RP, says GMA

By Carlito Pablo

THE ENEMY of your friend is not necessarily your enemy, especially if the former can help you fight your own enemy.

President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday said that the country had enlisted not only the help of the United States but also Libya in the war against the Abu Sayyaf.

While the United States has sent troops for the Balikatan 02-1, Libya "gave economic assistance in vulnerable areas," Ms Macapagal said over lunch with Malacañang reporters.

The President said she talked with Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi on the phone last year and told him that she needed help against the Abu Sayyaf.

At the time, the government panel negotiating with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front was in Libya and a panel member handed the phone to Ghadafi so he could talk with Ms Macapagal.

"He asked how he could help. I said 'in the past we used to pay ransom but that didn't work and this time I'm going to fight it out but I need your help,'" the President recalled her conversation with Ghadafi.

Ms Macapagal said Ghadafi later issued a "strong statement" against the Abu Sayyaf bandits, who were then holding hostages taken from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan last May 27.

Ghadafi also gave economic assistance to "vulnerable areas" although the President could not recall the details except one "project" at the Liguasan Marsh in Central Mindanao.

The United States considers Libya a rogue state and Ghadafi a sponsor of international terrorist activities.

Ms Macapagal, however, doesn't find Ghadafi an abominable person as his detractors had painted him.

"He came from Sandhurst," Ms Macapagal said, referring to the Sandhurst School in Berkshire in the United Kingdom where Ghadafi was educated.

The President noted though that she had more contact with US President George Bush and his officials. Ms Macapagal said she had been getting "messages" from Bush on "security matters" through the American ambassador in Manila.

Church in Spain . . .

From page A1

quiet worship.

Llopis' church in the southeast coastal town of Moraira is the first in Spain to install such a device, which transmits low-power radio signals that sever communications between cellular handsets and cellular base-stations.

Llopis said that when he flicks the switch, "I ensure that the religious service is celebrated within the parameters of prayer," the national news agency Efe quoted him as saying.

The controversial technology is designed to create quiet zones in places like restaurants, movie theaters and libraries.

Commercial jamming systems are illegal in the United States, Canada and Britain, but some countries such as Australia and Japan allow limited use.

Spain has a legal vacuum, says NiceCom, the only Spanish company which markets the technology. It has been doing so for two years, and lawmakers are now discussing the issue, NiceCom spokesperson Inma Jimenez said.

The Spanish Science and Technology Ministry did not return a call seeking comment. *AP*

A puzzlement . . .

From page A1

that there is a strategic intent, and that is to establish and expand a military presence in southern Philippines directed at Muslim revivalist movements there and in Southeast Asia," Bello said.

A total of 160 US Special Forces soldiers are training Filipino troops pursuing Abu Sayyaf bandits holding an American couple and a Filipino nurse hostage for 10 months. The Special Forces are part of a 660-strong US contingent involved in the six-month training exercise aimed at wiping out the Abu Sayyaf, which has been linked to the al-Qaida network.

The 14-member peace mission from 11 countries, which returned to Manila on Tuesday from a three-day visit to Basilan, said it found human rights violations in the US-backed military operation against the Abu Sayyaf.

"We have grounds for suspecting human rights violations, and there must be an investigation," said Matti Wuori, a Finnish human rights lawyer and European Parliament member.

Violations

The mission reported warrantless arrests, summary executions by the Philippine military and torture of prisoners. There was no evidence of US military involvement in the abuses, according to Bello.

"When I go back to Brussels, I will report to the European Parliament and we'll be monitoring the situation in the Philippines. And we will address this later. So this is not a hit and run operation. This is a responsible visit by very responsible human rights advocates," Wuori said. He urged the Philippine government to be more "transparent."

Besides the European parliament, members of the mission said they would bring to the attention of the United Nations, the US government and various international bodies the preliminary findings of human rights violations in the war in Basilan and Zamboanga, and the Philippine government's cold treatment of the team.

GMA's dare

President Macapagal-Arroyo dared the peace mission to circulate whatever report it had prepared to any international body.

"Let them go ahead and do it!" the President said. "The people know who they are. They belong to an ideological line," Ms Macapagal said.

The President said members of the mission had been "appropriately characterized" by National Security Adviser Roilo Golez and her spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao.

Golez and Tiglao had earlier said that the mission was expected to come up with an anti-American report, partly because the Filipino organizers were known for their anti-US bias.

The two were referring to Akbayan partylist Rep. Loreta Rosales and University of the Philippines professors Walden Bello and Roland Simbulan. "That's what it is," the President said of her officials' reading of Rosales, Bello and Simbulan.

Ms Macapagal also defended the non-cooperation of military and local government officials in Basilan with the international mission.

Not masochists

"They are not masochists," Ms Macapagal said of the officials. "They (mission) already have a conclusion in their minds. So why waste your time," the President said.

Wuori reacted to accusations that members of the mission had no business poking their noses into Philippine issues.

"Well, I have been poking my nose into South Africa, into the Balkans, into Russia, the Middle East. I have worked with the United Nations, the International Commission of Jurists, with many heads of state like Nelson Mandela, Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic, Desmond Tutu," Wuori said.

"It is the business of human rights defenders to probe atrocities and to obtain dialogue," he said.

Wuori said he was surprised by the Philippine government's decision to close the doors on the probe.

"If doors are then closed on our face, then there is always something to hide," he said.

Abnormal

Peace mission members pressed for a more exhaustive probe of the situation in Basilan because of the "abnormal" atmosphere of fear in the area that prevented the victims from talking.

They have also expressed a strong desire to come back again, convinced that the issues would affect the region.

They said they were not intimidated by Golez's threat to ban foreigners who wanted to conduct similar probes.

Wuori said the Philippine government's negative reaction to the probe could affect the European Union's relations with Manila. He explained that the EU had a treaty system with more than 120 countries based on democracy and respect for human rights.

"If there are violations of democracy and human rights like torture that we found in Basilan, then the EU can take this up," Wuori said. "The trade and economic relations we have with such countries are imbedded in the human rights standard," he said.

Wuori said there could be diplomatic and legal approaches in addressing the human rights issue in Basilan.

Lee Rhiannon, a member of the New South Wales Legislative Council, said that she would present her report to her party. The report will also be brought to the attention by an Australian senator to the Federal Parliament.

Earl Martin, a delegate from the United States, said he would bring to the attention of US Senators Daniel Inouye (Democrat, Hawaii) and Ted Stevens (Republican, Alaska) the concerns in Basilan. The senators will visit the country next week to evaluate the conduct of Balikatan exercises. ***With reports from AP and Reuters***

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Exodus

EDITORIAL

AS INHABITANTS of Metro Manila flow out like a cataclysmic flood to provincial holiday sanctuaries for the five-day Holy Week break, those of us with a historical bent can easily recall the great exodus in the Middle Ages from plague-infested cities of Europe.

The flight from the metropolis is less motivated by the desire for mortification—which is the leitmotif of Lent—than by the need to flee the national capital where its inhabitants are relentlessly stressed by services that don't work—water, garbage collection, overloaded telephone systems and the fiendish transport chaos.

Thus, the exodus is an expression of relief in which urban inhabitants turn rural migrants, reversing the pattern of urban overpopulation marked by the diaspora of rural migrants to the center, in search of jobs and other opportunities to improve their chances in life.

One person who sees this human flood as an economic opportunity—i.e., to boost tourism—is Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon. To Gordon, the Easter week is a chance to encourage Filipinos to see their country and spend money that would at the same time stimulate the services sector—hotels, restaurants, resorts—and the underground economy composed of underclasses selling food and amenities to urban tourists.

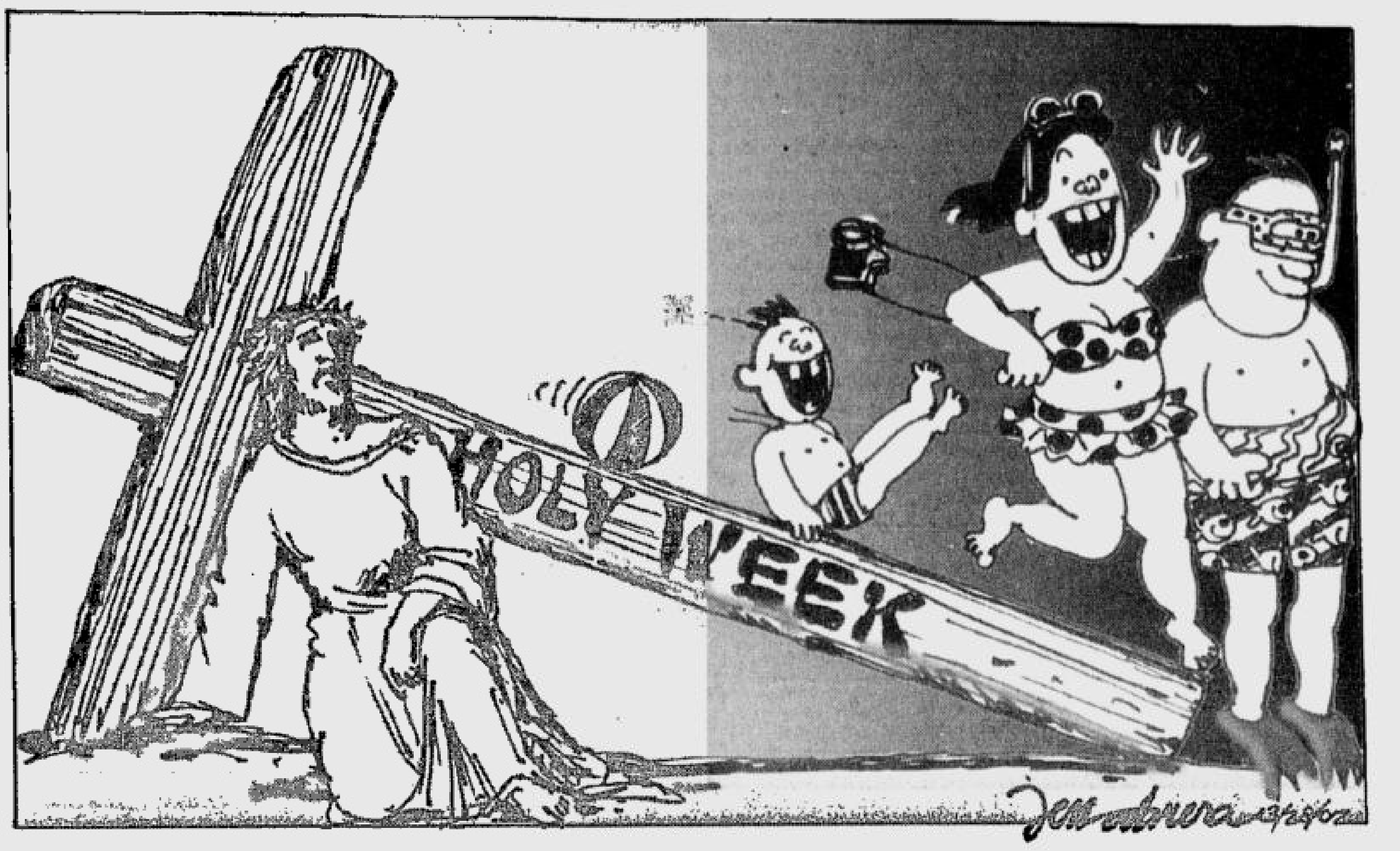
Gordon calls this a boom that would put more life in the anemic tourist industry that is one of the lowest dollar-earning tourist industries in Asia. He is probably right, but he is implicitly admitting at the same time that it takes a lengthy religious event like Christmas or Lent to keep the tourism industry afloat. When Gordon speaks of a boom, he is not really talking about a profound discovery. Whether or not the industry receives incentives from the Department of Tourism, these holidays have traditionally been known, since the time we can remember, as occasions for Filipinos to be together with their family and friends and to travel. They don't need the DOT, much less Gordon, to indulge in this pastime.

Gordon, if not the Macapagal administration, has, however, used the Christmas and the Lent holidays as a springboard to institutionalize the bizarre concept that lengthy holidays and shorter working hours are good for the economy. The boost to tourism is cited as an advantage. It is hard to imagine how less work and more holidays can increase the national economic output. If we say that long holidays can undermine the work ethic, we might be more correct. Tourism is only a small segment of the economy, and an internal tourism industry is as buoyant only as the income of Filipinos will permit.

For the Filipino middle class, which probably does the most internal traveling during long holidays, the Christmas or Lent breaks are the only times they can afford to travel and spend their holidays, drawing on their savings. Big businesses complain about added overtime pay costs and a drop in output during long holidays, and small and medium-sized businesses are even less able to meet the costs.

The worst victim of encouraging the notion that one can get more by doing less is the work ethic which, in the experience of resource-poor countries like South Korea and Japan, was mainly responsible for their economic miracle in the post-war period. This administration, in an effort to be popular, is telling our people that we can dispense with hard, sustained work as a short-cut not only to economic recovery but also to have a strong, competitive economy. In the '50s and the '60s, when we had abundant natural resources, the relatively high rate growth of those periods was driven by the export of natural resources which entailed destroying our forests and other resources. Now, we have shifted to export-led growth strategy, driven by products of industry and technology, following the depletion of natural resources and the closing of the agricultural land frontier which has given way to recreational industries like golf courses and to real estate development.

Industry, technology and services require human industry fired by the work ethic, not the holiday mania for the sake of tourism. The product of these industries must be competitive to survive global competition. In this context, the notion of a four-day working week must be examined as to its effect not only on output but also on efficiency and productivity.



Middle East conflict goes back to Biblical times

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

ISN'T it ironic that as we observe Holy Week—which is a recollection of the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ to redeem Mankind from sin—people are being shot and blasted to death in the Holy Land? It is the holiest of holy places of not one but three of the world's great religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. All their great prophets preached "peace on earth, goodwill to men," but their followers centuries later are still killing one another. The Israelis and Palestinians can't even agree on a proposed ceasefire being brokered by the most powerful and influential nation in the world, the United States.

To give you something to think about today and tomorrow, here's a little lesson on what started it all. Historically speaking, the enmity between the Israelis and Palestinians can be said to go back to the biblical patriarchs, as far back as Moses in the Old Testament. As you must have read and seen in the movies, Moses led the Hebrews out of bondage in Egypt, parted the Red Sea and crossed it, and stopped at Sinai to pick up the Ten Commandments.

After wandering in the wilderness for some time, the Hebrews invaded Canaan (the present Holy Land) which was then inhabited by various tribes. The Hebrews, under Joshua, conquered these tribes and established a loose federation of their own tribes. In short, the Hebrews grabbed the land from the resident Canaanites, ancestors of the present Palestinians. That started the age-old hatred between the Palestinians and Israelis.

To complete the picture, however, it should be pointed out that the Hebrews had, in the era of the Patriarchs, migrated to Canaan which they believed was the "Promised Land" that God sent Abraham to find. They then went to Egypt and into captivity until led out by Moses in the Exodus.

In the era of the Judges, the Hebrews fought off the resident Canaanites and their neighbors, including the Philistines whose champion Goliath, as we have been told so many times, was defeated by the boy David with a slingshot.

The Hebrew kingdom reached its golden age during the reigns of David and Solomon (of the one-baby-two-mothers fame) after which it divided into two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. In 722, Israel fell to the Assyrians and its people were dispersed and lost their identity. In 587, Judah (from which the name "Jew" derives) fell to Nebuchadnezzar; its people were exiled to Babylon. (Now you know how the appellation "Wandering Jew" came about.)

The Hebrews were freed by Cyrus of Persia and returned to Canaan only to be invaded four more times: by the Greeks (hence the Greek name Judea), by the Egyptians, by the Syrians and lastly by the Romans. The Holy Land was under the Romans during the time of Jesus.

During all the years that the Jews were dispersed all over the world, the hankering to return to the homeland never left them. Before World War II, a world Jewish movement to return to the homeland was born. The League of Nations (predecessor of the present United Nations) considered carving out of Palestine the homeland of Israel but World War II overtook it.

During the war, Hitler gassed millions of European Jews in his concentration camps (he must have had Palestinian blood). This hastened the creation of the state of Israel after the war. Jews migrated or were smuggled into the prospective homeland.

When the new Jewish state of Israel was inaugurated in 1948 by the United Nations, the Arab nations surrounding it (Syria, Egypt, Jordan), its old enemies attacked it. But the superior Israeli fighter jets, tanks and warriors defeated the Arabs in the Six-Day War. There were a few more attacks against Israel by its neighbors but the Israelis hurled all of them back across the desert.

All the time, the Palestinians were claiming the land occupied by Israel as their own. They formed guerrilla and terrorist groups that repeatedly raided the Jewish *kibbutzim* (settlements), Israel hit back with its own raids.

Finally, the Palestinian state was created by the United Nations on the West Bank of the Jordan River. Yasser Arafat is its first head. No two neighbors hated each other more. The raids and terrorist bombings continued.

One of the most bitter bones of contention are the Arab lands invaded and occupied by Israel as buffer zones against attack by the Arabs. Israel claims they are necessary for its defense. It says it just wants to have normal ties and live peacefully with its neighbors. Its neighbors say it must return the occupied lands first.

Saudi Arabia has proposed to offer Israel normal ties in return for its pullout from occupied lands. An Arab summit in Beirut this week will consider this proposal. But this initiative could be tainted without the presence of Yasser Arafat who has been unable to get out of the West Bank city of Ramallah for almost four months now because of travel restrictions imposed by Israel.

The United States is trying to hammer out a truce so that the Israelis will let him out to attend the crucial Arab summit that opens today.

But Israeli and Palestinian officials failed again to agree on a ceasefire and violence continues to rage in Palestinian territories. And there the situation stands in the Holy Land this Holy Week.

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CORRECTIONS: Vivian Yuchengco, head of the Philippine Stock Exchange, is not the daughter of ambassador and taipan Alfonso Yuchengco. (As I See It, 3/20/02) She is a niece—the daughter of Yuchengco's sister.

Yuchengco did not pay P18 million (as previously reported), but only P11 million for a large painting by National Artist Carlos V. Francisco. The painting now reportedly hangs at the main office of the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.

Pain and suffering

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

INSPIRED, or alarmed, by the events last year that became known as "Edsa III," Jaime Cardinal Sin declared last Sunday a day for reflection on the subject. It was time, Sin said, that the Catholic Church rediscovered its pastoral priorities, and those pastoral priorities began and ended with the "least of my brethren," as Jesus Christ put it, also called the poor.

"We see poor families living in *karitons* that they call their homes," said Sin. "On lucky days, they mix salt with rice to feed their empty stomachs. It's a shame that we do not recognize God in them." Toward that end, he declared last Sunday Caritas Sunday, with no intention of making a pun on *kariton*, with the intention only of giving alms to the poor. All collections last Sunday were to go to the poor.

It's not a bad idea, even if it took a year to discover, and even if it's being made on the eve of one of the most disruptive, or destructive, events in this country's history. Holy Week is truly a good time to dwell on human frailty and suffering, and what could be a more obdurate source and expression of them than poverty?

I've always said myself that the first step one can take to help the poor is to see them. That is not the easiest thing in the world, even if it seems commonsensical. It is never easy, as Albert Camus once said, to gaze at the bloodstained face of humanity, and you can't have a face more bloodstained than the face of one who has lost all laughter. Try looking at the empty eyes of street children on a wild and windswept night. That Sin should lower his gaze beyond the level of the pulpit to see not just the yellow-dressed crowd at the Edsa Shrine but the tattered backs of those who crawl in the underbelly of this monstrous city, it is enough to make you believe in Easter.

But I don't know how far his gaze really goes. Or less metaphorically, I do not know whether he sees the destitute as subjects who have minds and wills of their own, or merely as objects who are there to be saved. That he has seen fit to show his concern for the poor by the age-old and almost reflexive church method of giving alms or benefaction, or by an earnest display of generosity, little indicates the first. Of course better acts of charity than none at all. If I were pushing a cart too, and do not know where my next meal is going to come from, I'd grab at anything that will be thrown my way. Speak for yourself, I'll tell anyone who denigrates the value of alms.

But you also wonder how far it will go to appease those who went on a rampage last year for reasons that are not so easy to pin down. Particularly when it still goes with a distrustful attitude toward the *hampaslupa*. Only last month, newly appointed bishop Soc Villegas told the world the Edsa Shrine was far too sacred to be despoiled by, well, he said any gathering that resonated with politics, but everybody knew what he meant. He was the same fellow who damned the rabble that massed at the Shrine last year for dirtying up the place. If I were pushing a cart, I'd grab the alms, but I won't forget I was told I was an affront to God's eyes.

Shortly after "Edsa III," Sin did apologize to the poor for having neglected them. But the apology itself, as I felt compelled to write then, reflected a paternalistic view of things. If I recall right, Sin used the very image of a parent who had been too busy to see how his children were doing. Well, quite apart from the fact that it is one truly irresponsible parent who lives in commodious circumstances—the archbishop's palace is not called a palace for nothing—while his children go hungry, the image suggests that all the poor do when they protest is go on a tantrum to get the attention of their parents. I do not know that anyone, rich or poor, will take apologies of that sort very well.

Holy Thursday and Good Friday do offer a good time for reflecting on many things—for kings as much as paupers, for palace-dwellers as much as slum-dwellers. Unless I am mistaken, the greatest lesson of Lent is this (that at least is what I've gotten from listening to the pulpit since I was a child and to "Jesus Christ Superstar" since then): God did not deliver humankind from evil and damnation by waving a magic wand, or thunder stick, and decreeing that he was lifting the curse of original sin from them. He did so by sending his only begotten son to earth to live the life of a carpenter's son, to be reviled and to die a most horrible death.

"Why should I die?" Christ sobs out in "Jesus Christ, Superstar." Good question. Why did He have to live among simple-minded and ignorant fishermen, trailed along by apostles and disciples most of whom could not understand what in God's—or his—name He was saying even if He had already put them in easy-to-learn parables? Why did He have to be scorned and humiliated by the people He served and even worked miracles for? Why did He have to drag a cross all the way to a hill, be nailed to it along with a couple of small-town hoods and turned by His tormentors into an object lesson in how not to be a messiah?

He was the son of God. He was God. He could very well have sat on His throne in the palace in the sky, and let a proxy do the work for Him. He could very well have said He was sorry He had not neglected His flock but would henceforth pay more attention to them. He could very well have mustered all the grace that the saints and martyrs of the Old Testament had accumulated and distributed them like alms to the damned. But He did nothing of the sort.

What can one say on this holiest of days? Thank God God the Son was not one to shirk his duties. Thank God God the Father was not very paternalistic.

* * *

Comments to dequiros@vasia.com

Faux pas in Monterrey

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IT happens even to the nice guys. What happened to Vice President and Foreign Secretary Teofisto Guingona at the United Nations-sponsored International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico, reminds me of what happened to Senate President Franklin Drilon at the PNP Day celebration in Camp Crame two months ago. Drilon arrived at the grandstand to watch the PNP parade, only to find that he had no seat among the VIP guests led by President Macapagal. Feeling snubbed, Drilon left the grandstand. That afternoon PNP Chief Leandro Mendoza was at his Senate office extending his profuse apologies for the embarrassing oversight.

What happened to Guingona, however, had an international dimension because he was representing the Philippine government and President Macapagal. Presidential spokesperson Rigoberto Tiglao has said that Ms Macapagal fully supports the Vice President in this episode, but what is clearly awaited is an official explanation and formal apology from the Mexican foreign ministry; for as Guingona rightly said, it's not an insult to his person alone, but to the country and the President. The amiable Mexican ambassador to Manila, Enrique Hubbard, was quick to offer his profound apologies but the Department of Foreign Affairs deemed it an insufficient response.

* * *

Evidently, Guingona, who was one of the speakers, had an invitation to the luncheon tendered by the governor of the host Mexican state of Nuevo Leon, Gov. Fernando Canales, for the 150 or so participating heads of state and other dignitaries. Because the security for the world leaders, led by US President George W. Bush, was extra tight, arrangement was made for the VIPs to arrive together in an exclusive bus at the luncheon place. Guingona, who was in that bus, got into the hall with the rest of the leaders, but subsequently, a Mexican protocol officer told him his name was not on the list and therefore, he was told to vacate table No. 5, despite the invitation he brought along. Thai Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra who witnessed the bump-off, tried to intervene for the Vice President, identifying to the Mexican protocol the distinguished guest they were turning away. But this did not remedy the situation—an unbelievable protocol blunder. The upset Vice President walked out.

* * *

Soon the Monterrey media got wind of it and a persistent reporter managed to get the story into a newspaper there. Learning of the faux pas, Canales immediately sent a letter of apology to Guingona and a basket of fruits. In the evening, Mexican President Vicente Fox tendered a state dinner for all the dignitaries, but Guingona chose to snub it. Moreover, Thai Prime Minister Thaksin and the Brunei foreign minister joined him in his protest by snubbing the state dinner too. The next morning, the wife of President Fox organized an event for the wives of the delegates, but Ruth Guingona was asked by her husband to stay away lest things get more complicated.

* * *

From accounts, what's coming out is that the UN Conference was rather poorly organized. Inefficiency is no excuse on the part of the organizers, but considering the magnitude of that poverty summit, kinks were not surprising. It appears, for instance, that the luncheon invitation was released to the chargé d'affaires of the Philippine Embassy in Mexico, Consul General Eduardo de Vega, only an hour before the event, which may help explain why the Guingona's name was not on the list. On the other hand, as the Mexican media noted, the Cuban delegation was highly aggrieved over the hustling out of President Fidel Castro from the plenary hall prior to the arrival of US President Bush. The latter was reported to have threatened to boycott Monterrey if Castro was around to insult him.

* * *

It was unfortunate that the Monterrey snub happened to one of the most decent officials in this country, but what may have contributed to it was the fact that the Philippine government appeared to be cutting cost too much. This is a most laudable aim, but it could wreak havoc on preparations for any event. Malacañang trimmed the Monterrey delegation to the Guingonas, Neda Director General Dante Canlas and Finance Undersecretary Josefina Amatong, thumbing down Guingona's head executive assistant Hedy Duenas. Newly confirmed Ambassador to Mexico Justo Orros was in Los Angeles earlier, preparing to assume his new post, Mexico City, but reports said he was disallowed by the Palace from following to Monterrey. Orros decided to stay in LA while the conference went on, arguing that it was more embarrassing for him to be in the Mexican capital while his foreign secretary was in Monterrey. After the faux pas, however, Guingona ordered Orros to stay put in Manila until the Mexican foreign ministry had a suitable explanation. Chargé De Vega was said to have wanted to bring to Monterrey two staffers from the embassy in Mexico City to help him with the confab details and the delegation's needs, but the embassy's tight budget did not allow it.

* * *

Veteran DFA watchers would pin part of the blame on the Philippine Embassy in Mexico City, arguing that De Vega should have checked and double-checked everything, in addition to the staff work that the DFA should have done in preparation for Guingona's visit. But I had a chance to see De Vega in action in Mexico City during the Christian Democrat conference last November, and he appears to be a hard-working young diplomat who knows better than to leave things unchecked; but it's possible that he could have been overworked, so that one function fell through. The faux pas has encouraged talk anew that Guingona was again a victim of another DFA sabotage. I think this theory won't hold water, but it should teach the DFA and its embassies never to take anything for granted.

'Keep my mind stayed on Him'

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

HERE'S the conclusion of "When God Says No," one of a collection of essays contained in the book "Amusing Grace" by Rosanne C. Romero. In this essay, she shares her struggle to keep her mind "stayed on the Lord" despite the pain and affliction of multiple sclerosis or MS.

* * *

GOD has also shown me that I am not to use MS as an excuse for bad behavior. We are not supposed to use any of our trials, any of our difficulties as excuses for our ill-temperedness. I reasoned that MS was getting me too frustrated, I couldn't help but be short-tempered. Like being sick was some kind of license for bratty behavior. Nonsense; strictly for the birds.

Once someone came up to me to say that suffering couldn't be God's specific will for me. Suffering is for people like St. Paul, St. Stephen. It's sort of reserved for those of the stature of the saints. Let me get this clear. I nurture no illusions about being a saint. Ask anyone who's lived with me. They can tell you that. But God's world doesn't spin around saints only. It also spins around ordinary slow learners like me. I do not get earth-shaking revelations about suffering, but God gives me little lessons that I can chew on. Lately He has been teaching me to speak and behave more kindly to others.

When I go shopping, people actually stop and stare. They see my cane and watch me amble around. Someone said I should feel flattered that people stare at me. Please don't give me that. I feel like a performing dog when people gawk. In the beginning, I was given to making faces, tossing my head, crossing my eyes and mumbling! And if I could have stomped my feet without falling, I'd have done that, too. What a shame for a woman my age to behave this way! I'm sure the Saints would have borne this with a lot more fortitude. But I am learning to answer politely to "*Eh, ilang taon na ba kayo* ma'am *at paano kayo nabalian* (May I know how old you are, ma'am, and how you broke your leg)?"

* * *

GOD is also teaching me how to handle my pain. There's a lot of pain in MS people don't know about. Sometimes when I do talk about pain, there are those who quickly equate it with migraine, menopausal pain, hypertension headaches, etc. After that, I don't feel like saying any more. It used to disappoint me a whole lot that I could not make people understand the pain I was having. For sometime now, God has been teaching me to pray for other people especially at the precise moment the pain begins. Because of this, my countenance has changed. I feel little need to wail about my pain to others and feel no compulsion to explain it. God sees my pain; God knows my pain. That's enough for me.

I'm on my 15th year now with MS. Many have prayed for me, prayed over me, held vigils for me and still do. Still, I continue to suffer MS. Does this mean God is less powerful than we all thought Him to be? I do not believe so. Because my MS continues, does it mean God is less merciful? Does it make Him less just? Certainly not. He is a God of faithfulness. A God without injustice. My having MS does not diminish that. The Lord appoints each of us our own lots for a purpose. I know this and it's important for me to be gracious in spite of it and to be reconciled to the place God in His providence has put me in. I'm learning so much about living for God and loving Him. I'm learning serious lessons about life. I'm learning them best through this affliction.

* * *

SOME people think I don't want to get well. But is it really that? At the moment, MS has deteriorated my left eye. My bladder hasn't been working well for years now. I keep falling. I drop things. My sense of balance has gone bad as well. My legs are weaker and wobblier than they were in 1986. I have pins and needles day and night on my arms and legs. How can I possibly not want healing? The next thing I'm going to say will not be the profoundest thing but I must say it: If all that we set our hearts upon in times of sickness is health, we become oblivious to anything else that the Lord wants for us. Healing is important for me. But, it's no longer the most important thing. Most vital for me is to seek after the Healer. Not the healing.

There's an old story in the Bible about King Nebuchadnezzar who threw three young men into the fire because they refused him worship. The three young men told him, "Our God is so mighty and so powerful that He can deliver us out of these flames. But even if He does not, we will still praise Him alone." This is the kind of heart I long to have. To be able to stand true to my God even as I go on with MS. I know that with just one word, God can wipe all this away and restore my health. Yet, even if He chooses not to, I want to keep true to Him and love Him.

I may suffer MS longer than I can imagine. I only need to remember that God took the trouble to prepare me for this. I know the Lord loves me, but if I don't keep my eyes on Him, I begin to question it. The saddest is, "Maybe God has stopped loving me...?" And then the desert feels too hot to bear.

If I am to keep from experiencing deathly thirst, I must look to Him. My strength and my courage can only be the Lord. I cannot, I must not look away.

In Scripture it says, "Thou wilt keep Him in perfect peace, he whose mind is stayed on Thee."

If you are going to pray for me after reading this, please pray this. Pray that my mind be stayed on Him.

Sins of the Fathers

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

SOME years ago, I did a magazine feature story about a mission area in T'boli territory which looked every inch a Shangrila, complete with massive development projects and all. A place straight out of the movie "Lost Horizon." A few years later, I wrote a follow-up story on how it became scandal-ridden and how the American priest who lorded it over for many years fell in disgrace. The community became polarized, accusations flew from the contending groups. Among the accusations hurled against the priest was the rape of a minor. The story on the trial was in the news for some time.

One of the witnesses was a nun who was a nurse working in the mission hospital at that time. She had examined the girl and had found her to have been sexually abused. She later testified in court. But her testimony amounted to nothing. She testified too late, or changed her testimony too late.

I remember we spoke at the INQUIRER office where she brought me some documents on the case. I asked the nun if she was sure the girl had been abused and she said yes. She examined her shortly after the crime happened. I asked her why she kept quiet and testified too late on the victim's behalf. Her answer was: At that time, she thought she had to protect the image of the Church. Or something to that effect.

When she said that, something in my brain, my heart, my stomach, my liver, my reproductive organs, my lungs and, most of all, my soul, exploded in fury. I did not say anything right away. I have this awesome capacity to hold back and still be all right. She seemed contrite. Still I wanted to shake and rattle her entire being and scream, "You wanted to protect the image of the powerful, wealthy, patriarchal, institutional Church. What about the girl's rights, what about justice for this very poor, young, innocent tribal girl who was abused and whose vagina you had seen lacerated and bleeding in front of you?"

Well, I did write about that scandal and the injustice. About the end of *Lemlunay*, of Camelot. Shangrila in ruins.

I think of that case now that the Catholic Church (to which I belong) is very much in the news because of the sexual sins of its shepherds against their own flock. Its *mea culpas* for long-hidden sins are reverberating, with no less than the Pope himself condemning the crimes and saying sorry. Maybe this thing was close to exploding badly, and the only way to deal with it was to own up—openly and loudly.

At the jampacked St. Patrick's Cathedral on Palm Sunday, New York Cardinal Edward Egan denounced the "evil" perpetrated by pedophile priests. But he had been under fire himself for having allowed suspects to continue with their ministry when he was the bishop in Connecticut.

In Washington, parishioners gave a standing ovation for Rev. Percival D'Silva who called for Boston's Cardinal Bernard Law's resignation. Law had allowed then priest John Geoghan to move from parish to parish even when more than 130 people had accused him of molesting them during his 30-year ministry.

Time's April 1 issue has a special report on "Catholicism in Crisis" which includes the first-person confession of "Fr. X" who served time in prison, a victim's story, a pedophile's mind-set and what outraged Catholics are thinking.

The problem, it seems, could not simply be reduced to the issue of celibacy. Sex-related offenses and crimes are not necessarily the result of imposed celibacy. As ex-con Fr. X confessed: "What would bring it on? I don't know, maybe fatigue, maybe stress. But I know that I worked seven days a week, 16 hours a day, as a priest. I didn't take a day off. But I was very good. That's how I got my identity. That's how I got my fulfillment. I was a good priest who did amazing things, but I didn't have a personal life. Among my many priestly activities, I worked closely with children. My reaching out to them was not to harm them. I was reaching out for affection, for intimacy, reaching out to belong, to have somebody who would be my friend, in the sense of what I didn't have...The physical contact, the touch was not in the strictest sense sexual. But the lust would take over at a certain point...But when I would go to the genital contact, I had no doubt about that being wrong. I didn't think of it as harmful, really, but I knew it was morally wrong."

Oh, but while this explosion of *mea culpas* from the Catholic Church is a good development, it seems to focus only on pedophilia and sexual abuse of minors. What about adults abusing adults?

Women religious in the United States have also come forward to denounce "the sexual harassment, exploitation and even rape of nuns by priests." Last year these church women launched their "Call to Accountability Campaign" and The National Catholic Reporter came out with a report on the abuses. The nuns' campaign is urging the church hierarchy, the Vatican especially, to heed the call for accountability.

Among their demands: Cooperate with civil authorities by providing evidence for the prosecution of church officials involved in rape and sexual violence; provide medical care for nuns and other women who have been infected with AIDS/HIV by the clergy; reinstate nuns who were dismissed because of pregnancy and provide financial support for children fathered by priests/religious; adopt a policy on sexual conduct so as to eliminate violence against women; issue a public apology in the form of pastoral letter from the Holy See for all forms of violence against women, including sexism, committed by church officials.

Sexism may not be a crime in itself, but it begets a myriad of crimes against women.

A view from the top

YOUNGBLOOD

Rowena S. David

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

HAVE you ever experienced standing on a very high place, looking down and observing people below? What did you see? Well I have. And I have been hit with a realization.

Have you noticed that we select life partners based on certain qualities or standards? Most of us make our partners the center of our lives, the reason for living, the reward that keeps us moving forward, that makes each day worth waking up to. As if the only reason we were born is to grow up, go to church every Sunday, go to school, graduate, have a job, get married, start a family. Then the children will leave when they're old enough and they, in turn, will repeat the cycle we had gone through. And then comes the dying part.

It's this realization that made me ask: Why? What are all these for? How do we spend our time more productively? I mean, sure, motherhood is an accomplishment, but it's not an obligation. It's a choice. There are many who have decided not to follow the beaten path. And these individuals who have chosen to be different are perceived to be behaving in a "socially incorrect" manner. Or worse, social outcasts.

"Why is he or she like that? It's not the common thing to do. Why can't he or she just do what everyone else is doing?" People would ask.

The key word there is "common." Do we always have to do what is considered by society to be the common thing? Must we always follow these dictates? Must we always have to go with the flow? Who decides what is right and what is wrong?

My question is: Are we doing what we are supposed to be doing? Are we spending our lives the way it's intended? Is there any other way to live our lives, a better way? We've been living this way since time immemorial and look what it has brought us: wars, crimes, fear, etc.

Look around us. Nothing is new anymore. Everything has been done before, and will be done again in the future. Parties, movies, clothes, stories. They have all been told before a thousand times. And this is why when I see people gyrating wildly on TV and saying, "Let's party!" (as if partying has never been done before) I can't help but think: Have humans lowered their standard on what they call "fun"?

Have we lowered our expectations and magnified our excitement about certain things and events in our lives in order to ignore a gnawing feeling deep inside? A feeling that says, there's a better way to live?

Is there really a more beneficial way to live?

All this thinking makes me realize one thing: we are on the brink of destroying ourselves. This may sound a bit harsh or pessimistic but I happen to believe this is true. Look at the newspapers. Have you noticed the violence in them? Murders, rape, incest, robbery, graft and corruption, plunder. Why do we build weapons that have the power to eliminate the entire human race and then declare they're all for peace and protection? Protection from whom? From other nations? Have we become a society based on fear that we have become afraid of one another? Is nuclear power the key to achieving peace? Are these the actions of an "enlightened" society?

We say we don't approve of violence but what are we contributing to society in order to achieve a peaceful environment? We give toy guns to our children, we let them watch violent movies (because if there were no violence in movies, it wouldn't be "fun" to watch), we let them play violent games. And then we wonder why the morals of our young seem to be going downhill. Is this what we teach our children? That violence is a natural tendency among humans?

If this is so then we are all responsible for what is happening all around us. We deserve the kind of environment we live in. And that is because we are the ones responsible for shaping our environment. We deserve what we get. We reap what we sow.

One could say, "But I have no part in it. I didn't do all those things!" That person could be very wrong. We are responsible for one another. We are, after all, our brothers' keepers. We are what's going on around us. Violence exists because we allow it to happen. Our environment, after all, is just an extension of our self.

Many arrogant leaders of the world have declared: "Man has arrived." But I beg to differ. How can we "arrive" if we continue fighting one another? How can we "arrive" if we keep having this tendency to make things more complicated than they really are?

So how do we know if we have reached our fullest potential as a race and as persons? The truth is, I don't know. I'm still a work in progress just like everyone else here on earth. But I have been thinking about it and I have come up with some ideas concerning this question.

We have "arrived" when we:

1. Stop thinking as individuals, but as a race, the human race, that is. This makes me think of the ant s. I've never seen a species that is so organized, that moves as a single entity than the ants. Not only do they NOT climb on top of one another to get to the food, but they fall in line as well!

2. Have learned to see the Divine spark in every person. Understand that every human being is a reflection of God. It is through this understanding that hurting the people around us will be abhorrent to us, because hurting them would mean hurting God as well. This might not be easy at first, especially when you find yourself face to face with a hold-up man, only minutes after withdrawing all your savings from the ATM. You probably want to strangle the person who did this to you. It is during these times when "seeing with spiritual eyes" rather than with emotional ones can be more beneficial.

3. Are intent on the action, not on the fruits of the action. This is what Lord Krishna tried to imbue to his pupil Arjuna in the book "Bhagavad Gita." Some of us will only do something for another if we know we will be rewarded for it.

4. Are spiritual, rather than religious. Being religious is a good thing. But being spiritual is even better. It doesn't mean abandoning your faith in your God. On the contrary, it means embracing all the aspects of God. There is only One God, but bear in mind that He wears many disguises.

5. Have learned to let go of our loved ones, to set them free, to allow them to grow and create their own lives, even if it means a life without us.

6. Have realized that success is relative. We all have our own issues to resolve and that means we have different agendas of our own. The success of the other doesn't mean one must do exactly what the other did to achieve success. Success can be in any form. In other words, your measuring stick is only your own. Don't use it on others and don't let others use it on you either. Do what you want to do, be good at it, and you will find success.

7. Realize that completeness is your true nature.

"You're nobody until somebody loves you." This song is indirectly responsible for the thousands of suicides that occurred on this planet ever since suicide was discovered by heartbroken lovers. And this is the illusion we all must overcome: the illusion that we need a special someone to feel complete, to be satisfied with our lives, to feel good about ourselves, to feel valued. Someone should sue the writer of this song because he was responsible for sending a very inaccurate message. We were created by God and don't think for a minute that God would create something incomplete.

Rowena S. David, 28, teaches at the Pamantasan ng Makati under the Department of Computer Science.

LETTERS

'We are not focused'

THE TRAGEDY of the Filipino during these times of trouble is that we are not focused.

We get angry because someone thinks his knee is more important than the heinous crime of plunder, and we focus on his knee instead of on the rape of our nation.

We get irritated because someone acts like a movie star, and we focus on his acting, instead of ignoring such C-rated movies.

We get incensed with the tactics of certain defense lawyers, and we focus on their antics, instead of writing them and giving them a piece of our mind.

We are enraged by some people called legislators in a building by the Manila Bay, and we focus on their inanities instead of letting them know that clowns do not merit reelection.

We get mad when a woman cries castration for rape, and we focus on the senselessness of this act, particularly because it comes from a woman who has a man with many mistresses, instead of trying to help countless women who have been victims of rape.

We become furious when an imprisoned man insults a Filipino of impeccable integrity—our Supreme Court Chief Justice, and we remain focused on this vindictive act, instead of writing our Chief Justice and assuring him of our faith in him.

We Filipinos seem to pour our energy and time, anger and emotions, into this specimen of humanity who does not even deserve to be called a human being, and we lose focus on our nation, on our magnitude of urgent problems, on the plight of our suffering. Worse, our emotions, spent out this way, paralyze action.

May our suffering Christ give us the light and strength to focus on that which deserves our focus.

—SR. CHRISTINE TAN, Alay Kapwa Christian Community, 2172 Fidel Reyes St., Malate, Manila

Remembering San Romero de America

THREE days and 22 years have passed since his assassination, Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero's ways, words and very cause still linger to this very day. Twenty-two years ago, the tiny nation of El Salvador drew the world's attention and took center-stage to showcase the gross human rights violations being committed in this war-stricken nation. This year's death anniversary of San Romero de America coincides with Christ's triumphant entry to Jerusalem.

As we usher in the Lenten Season, and amid the chaos and turmoil in our society, it is a most opportune time to also remember the death of one of the most important and outspoken religious figures of our time. That, on March 24, 1980, Romero went to the Divine Providence Hospital's chapel in El Salvador to celebrate a memorial Mass at 6 p.m. As he finished his homily and extended the invitation to prayer, and uttered one of his famous words; "I appeal to you...I order you, stop the persecution," a single shot rang out from the chapel doorway and Romero slumped to the floor with a bullet in his chest. He died soon after in a hospital emergency room.

The incident shocked the country. Romero was a well-known preacher and on becoming archbishop, he added to his homiletic style the litany of the sufferings of the Salvadoran people especially from the rural areas, because the media rarely reported and often distorted the news concerning the human rights violations in the country. Romero took upon himself the task of informing a public eager to know what was happening. His Sunday homilies often took off from the theme of human rights, for it was this issue and the Church's response that first drew world attention to El Salvador. These homilies were often a recital of both good news and bad news, proclaiming the good news of the liberating gospel and with the prophets of old, denouncing the evils of the day.

With the many not-so-beautiful events happening around both in our political and socio-economic scenes these days, it still helps to remember important people who fought and died for causes we now seem to take for granted and do not continue to fight for. Is it not a shame for us all—for the citizens, the leaders of our land, for the media and the Church—to continue our wicked ways despite the martyrdom of people who lived before us?

At this season of Christ's suffering, death and resurrection, we call on you to reflect on the words of Romero whose life was unique and whose voice became the voice of the voiceless, and help open up and touch the goodness in each one of us.

"I do not believe in death without resurrection. If they kill me, I shall rise in the Salvadoran people...I offer my blood to God for the redemption and resurrection of El Salvador. Martyrdom is a grace of God that I do not believe I deserve. But if God accepts the sacrifice of my life, let my blood be a seed of freedom and the sign that hope will soon be reality. Let my death, if it is accepted by God, be for the liberation of my people."

—MARY AILEEN D. BACALSO, secretary general, Asian Federation Against Involuntary Disappearances, Rm. 316, Philippine Social Science Center, Commonwealth Ave., Diliman, QC

Making aquaculture sustainable

I WOULD like to comment on Ma. Ceres Doyo's column titled "Fish pens, fish cages and drowned fish." Though she does not appear to be in favor of the aquaculture industry, hers is a very accurate description. And for that I would like to complement her. Perhaps she's less in favor of the way aquaculture is practiced rather than the actual concept. After all, our population's size just does not allow us to eat wild strawberries with our wild grains topped off by wild grown goat's milk for breakfast. So how do we do farm fish with minimal impact on the environment?

I have been working in the aquaculture industries in Canada, Japan, Korea and the Philippines for the past 15 years. Over the years I have had the opportunity to visit the industries in Chile, Norway, Germany, Malaysia and Thailand to observe the successful operations and many failures.

I truly believe in aquaculture but like anything, there are correct ways and wrong ways. Sustainable aquaculture is not science fiction or theory. For example, in Chile, the salmon farming industry brings US$1 billion annually to the once rural community of Puerto Monte. The locals not only produce fish but they created secondary industries in the chain such as value added processing by smoking, filleting, vacuum-packaging and exporting their fish. This strategy allows the Chileans to compete against suppliers that are located close to the European, American and Asian markets. And the best part is that those bright, young people who used to go to Santiago to flood the labor pool there, now stay in the rural areas to work on the farms. Not some young fellow in a *sando*, unacceptable to a single woman's parents, but a "great catch" involved in a technical, lucrative, exciting career, producing food for the world and an income for his community. Each one of those well-paid jobs supports the infrastructure. Puerto Monte has the money to build new schools, universities, hospitals, recreational centers, good roads, etc. All these things combine to bring up the standard of living for everyone in the community, including the population as far away as Santiago.

Food and poverty alleviation has been the government's mandate in South East Asia and Africa forever. Millions of dollars have been poured into projects that fail. So how do we make aquaculture sustainable in our part of the world? I certainly don't have all of the answers but cooperation, coordination and communication such as Doyo's article is a good start.

You may find some of the documents in my website interesting.

—RALP REY, managing director, InVivo Aquaculture International (BVI) Inc., Suite 908 Prince Plaza II, 101 Dela Rosa corner Legaspi Streets, Legaspi Village, Makati City

Wanted: Pinoy names

FOREIGNERS often ask why Filipinos are constantly concocting nicknames, changing them as frequently as we do with cell phone covers.

There's a paradox here. I suspect we keep renaming ourselves because Filipino parents are rather unreflective in the choices of their children's legal names, which means some Filipinos end up spending their entire lives trying to shed those names.

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

Blame it maybe on the Spaniards, who oversimplified things by telling us to name the child after the saint of the day. That probably worked out for most of the three centuries they were here but when the Americans took over, it became chic to have names like Joe and Fred so those who had the more traditional names then rechristened. Sometimes it was fairly easy, such as Jaime becoming Jim. Other changes were a bit more drastic, Fidel Ramos became Eddie, for example. I'm sure you can cite other examples of how Procopios and Urbanas reinvented themselves.

Today, most Filipino parents have abandoned the Catholic liturgical calendar and now name their children after politicians and show-biz personalities. Again, as the children grow up they may find themselves trying to shed off those names as celebrities fall from favor.

Those named after saints and sinners, oops, I meant politicians and movie stars, are the luckier ones. As I said, Filipino parents can be whimsical, almost playful in their choices of names. Remember that Filipino pilot, whose surname was Come (pronounced as two syllables) and whose parents gave him the name of "Wel" so he could be "Mr. Wel Come"? The name certainly didn't help when he flew to the States last year and met American immigration authorities who had received a false tip that he and a friend were terrorists. Wel Come was, well, not welcome.

I have a friend whose legal name is Jiffy, which he got because he was born "in a hurry, and in a jeepney" as his mother was rushing to the hospital. He dislikes the name tremendously and prefers J.D. or even plain old Jepoy. Eventually, he'd like to get a more dignified legal name. (The law allows these name changes if you can prove that your given name causes you embarrassment, or attracts ridicule. Be ready, however, to spend for the court proceedings.)

These strange names aren't always the parents' fault. At times, I suspect the practical jokers are the civil registrars, or the hospital personnel, who ask the parents what name they want to give and write them out as it is pronounced, no matter how odd they may be. If the parents are Visayan then you get all kinds of mutations on what would otherwise have been stigma-free names. My parents' mayordoma wanted to name her child Judy, but being Ilongga, got Jodie instead on the birth certificate. Which isn't too bad, really. Think of the wannabe Joels who ended up Jewels.

Younger Filipinos seem to be more serious now about naming their children. One of my readers, Grace Mamolo, wrote in last week to say she and her husband, Charles Benjamin, were resisting pressures to name their still unborn son "junior" or after one of their relatives. Children, Grace explains, should be their own persons.

Grace and Charles are also looking into the possibilities of "Filipino names" and asked me for suggestions. Which was when I realized we don't have that many. From what I remember, members of the Philippine Independent Church were the first to challenge the old Spanish "saint of the day" tradition. Which is why you had names like Magtanggol for males and, for females, Ligaya, Luzviminda (Luzon, Visayas, Mindanao), Lualhati, Bituin, Diwata, Tala, Amihan.

Notice the gender skewing here, with more Filipino names for females than for males. Some parents do name their sons after Filipino heroes, for example, Rizal (and Rizalino) and Bonifacio but the range is still limited. During the activist era of the '70s, there was a new search for Filipino names but, reflecting the turbulent times, you ended up with names like "Rebo" (for Rebolusyon).

I looked through our folk tales but didn't find the names too enticing. I do like Alunsina, the goddess who left her male chauvinist husband in tears, those tears becoming our first rain, but that's also a female name. Her husband, who I presume became more gender-sensitive later, was named Tungkung Langit, not too suitable for our times.

Then there are precolonial datus' names, but I'm not sure if Grace's son will relish being called Lapu-lapu. Others to consider: Lakandula, Sikatuna (but that's also a subdivision name) and Humabon, but that last datu was cozy with Magellan.

We might want to pick up examples from our Asian neighbors. Irwan Hidayana, an anthropologist friend teaching at the University of Indonesia, sent me some popular names they use. For females, I particularly liked Dewi (goddess), Dian (a little lamp, something enlightening), Mega (cloud), Sari (essence), Puspa and Sekar (flower), Cinta (pronounced Tsinta, love). For males, they have Prana (aura), Agung (great), Kelana (adventurer), Satria (knight), Teguh (strong, firm), Wahid (number one), Cahya or Cahyo (light).

I think we should bear in mind that the concept of a "Filipino name" is itself elusive. Even in the precolonial period some of the names already reflected external influences—Rajah Soliman's name, for example, is Arabic. Ultimately, a name is Filipino—Tagalog, Cebuano, Ilokano, Maranao, Kankanay, English, Spanish, Javanese—if it captures our spirit, our ethos.

I've timed this article for our long Easter weekend, hoping you might have time to write in with your suggestions. Will you help Grace and Charles Benjamin (and, maybe, other "infanticipating" couples)? Oh, we'll need those suggestions quickly—Grace says she's due in about two weeks!

* * *

Write to: miguel@pinoykasi.net

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Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Clarifications on UPCAT

THANK you for the news item on the UP College Admission Test (UPCAT) passers published on March 14, 2002. Considering the number of people affected by the UPCAT, any publicity about it is quite important.

We would, however, like to correct an inaccuracy in the article and explain an impression created by it.

On the first, it is not true that the 11,259 high school seniors who qualified for admission in June 2002 (out of 67,248 examinees) were chosen on the basis only of their first choice of campus. They were in fact chosen on the basis of their two choices of campus. This means that if the student did not make it to his/her first choice, he/she was immediately screened for his/her second choice. You will agree that the latter method is a fairer way of selection than the first.

Second, the article expressed "surprise" that "only 38.71 percent of qualifiers come from private high schools although 59.19 percent of applicants were private high school graduates." This should not really be a surprising fact considering that our excellence-equity admissions system (EEAS) has been implemented since academic year 1998-1999. Under this system, we factor in the geographic origin and the socio-economic status of applicants with a view to achieving greater equity and specifically to increase the percentage representation of high school graduates from disadvantaged public high schools in the University of the Philippines' population. This aim, in turn, is meant to reflect the public character of UP—an institution supported by the taxes of the Filipino people.

This year's data seem to indicate that the EEAS is achieving its aims. We are, however, currently reviewing the system, exercising care that no reverse discrimination occurs in the future.

—JOSE N. ENDRIGA, vice president for public affairs, University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Afghan quake death toll tops 2,000

KABUL—The death toll from the Afghan earthquake rose sharply on Wednesday as fresh aftershocks struck northern villages, the government said.

Aid efforts were hampered by appalling road conditions in the area.

Government officials had talked on Tuesday of around 2,000 deaths and thousands of injuries from a series of earthquakes, which flattened the market town of Nahrin and surrounding villages. They now say the death toll could be much higher.

"Casualties have mounted dramatically after new aftershocks early this morning," Afghan Defense Ministry spokesperson Gulbuddin said.

"We think the death toll is now far more than 2,000 and is going to go up dramatically as we dig through rubble in Nahrin and reach outlying villages," he said.

"There have been many new casualties in Burkah, about 20 km north of Nahrin," he said. "So far no substantial aid has reached the area because of destroyed roads."

Quakes late on Monday and on Tuesday morning devastated the market town of Nahrin, a district capital of mud-brick buildings with a population of 10,000 near the epicenter in the rugged Hindu Kush mountains.

"The tens of thousands who have fled their homes have settled in deserts and hills in the open air without food, shelter or water," Gulbuddin said. "It is desperate."

The interim government of the war-ravaged country has appealed for international help, and met United Nations officials, aid agencies and international peacekeepers on Wednesday morning to coordinate their response.

"It is beyond the interim government to deal with this tragedy," Interior Minister Yunus Qanuni said Tuesday. "We ask all international agencies and foreign countries to help us in this emergency situation."

Although UN aid agencies have rushed thousands of blankets and tents, as well as food and clothes, to the area, aid efforts have been hampered by the country's decaying road network and difficult mountain conditions.

The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said two of the three roads serving the immediate area had been blocked by quake damage.

Traffic from Kabul to the quake-hit zone also slowed to a crawl on Tuesday after two trucks overturned in the high-altitude Salang Tunnel.

To make matters worse, experts said roads into the area had been heavily mined during years conflict between the Northern Alliance opposition and the Taliban.

"There are a lot of anti-tank mines on the roads into Nahrin," Guy Willoughby, director of the HALO Trust demining group, said.

"The town was on the front lines between the Northern Alliance and the Taliban, and the Northern Alliance laid a lot of anti-tank mines on the roads to stop them taking the town." *Reuters*

Swiss, Turkish observers shot dead in W. Bank

HEBRON, West Bank—A Palestinian gunman in a police uniform shot dead two members of an international observer group as they drove along a West Bank road on Tuesday night, another monitor said.

Palestinian Authority officials denied that Palestinians were responsible for the attack.

The two foreign observers were the first to be killed in the Palestinian territories since an uprising against Israeli occupation erupted in September 2000. Nearly 1,500 people have died to date.

The car was plying a road frequented by Jewish settlers who have been targeted by Palestinian gunmen in an 18-month-old uprising against Israeli occupation.

Hussein Ozar Salam, a Turkish observer, was lightly wounded and two of his colleagues, a Swiss woman and a Turkish man, were killed when the gunman opened fire on them from a range of several meters near the West Bank city of Hebron.

Salam said he saw the gunman from the backseat of the car.

"The (car) lights were on and we saw him. He was in a Palestinian police force uniform. He was carrying a Kalashnikov and we shouted to him that we are (from the observer force) TIPH, don't shoot toward us," he said.

"We told him that we are from TIPH and he didn't care, he kept on shooting toward us and (my) colleagues were sitting in the front seat, just dead. The driver's blood splashed on my face," Salam told Israel Radio in an interview from hospital. *Reuters*

WORLDBRIEFS

Gunman kills 8 in Paris

NANTERRE, France—A man rose calmly and opened fire with automatic pistols at a city council meeting in a Paris suburb early Wednesday, killing eight people and seriously wounding 14 in what the prime minister called "a case of furious dementia." Police arrested the suspect, described as a 33-year-old man who often attended council meetings. The man did not speak during the shooting and did not make any coherent statement when he was arrested, officials said. The attacker used at least two automatic pistols, said rescue worker Laurent Vibert, and 50 shells were scattered inside the meeting room. Vibert said the suspect was known for strange behavior, and was close to the leftist Green Party. President Jacques Chirac, who met with grieving family members, called the events "a completely unimaginable drama." *AP*

IBM linked to Holocaust

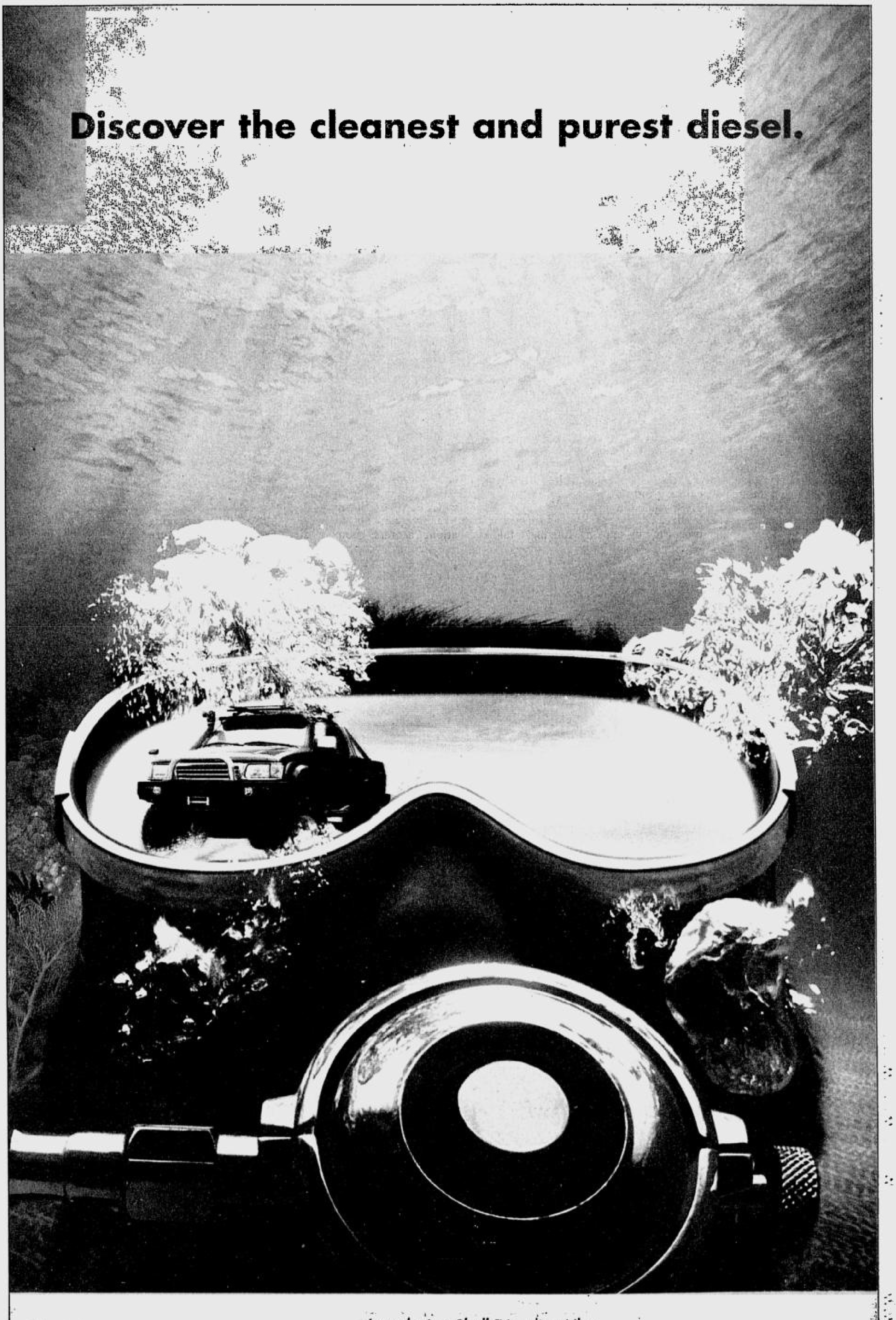
NEW YORK—Newly uncovered Nazi-era documents shed light on the alleged role IBM played in helping Hitler carry out the Holocaust in Poland, according to the author of a controversial book on the subject. Investigative reporter Edwin Black, the author of a book published last year titled "IBM and the Holocaust," puts forward further evidence to support his claims of IBM's knowledge and complicity in Nazi operations in wartime Poland in the paperback version to be published this week. Historians working as part of Black's research team said that in the paperback they had pieced together the previously fragmented story of IBM's role in supplying the organizational machinery used to transport millions of people to Polish death camps. *Reuters*

African 'Marshall Plan'

ABUJA—An African summit endorsed far-reaching measures on Tuesday intended to attract massive Western investments into Africa with promises of democracy and good governance. The summit in Nigeria was the biggest gathering under the auspices of the New Partnership for Africa's Development (Nepad), a home-grown initiative modeled on the "Marshall Plan" through which the United States helped rebuild Europe after World War II. Its plan estimates that Africa needs some $64 billion of investment inflows annually to ensure sustainable growth. *Reuters*

Andersen CEO resigns

NEW YORK—Joseph Berardino, the chief executive of Andersen, resigned on Tuesday, in a move designed to help the embattled accountant survive as it looks to settle criminal charges over its handling of Enron Corp.'s audit. Berardino, CEO for only 14 months, will stay in office until a successor is found. *Reuters*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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: The whole country will experience partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Clear to Partly Cloudy	Hi35° Lo 24°
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Hi 27° Lo 16°
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 34° Lo 23°
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Clark Zone	Clear to Partly Cloudy	Hi 35° Lo 23°
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Hi 30° Lo 21°
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 24°
Roxas	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Cebu	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°
Tacloban	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 24°
Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 25°
Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy	Hi 33° Lo 23°
Davao	Partly Cloudy	Hi 32° Lo 25°

Compiled by: Ray Leyesa, PDI Research/03/28/02

Miners clear Davao bridge

DAVAO CITY—Small-scale miners protesting the closure of their gold processing plants in Mt. Diwalwal in Compostela Valley have allowed traffic to resume on the Pan-Philippine Highway after a dialogue with Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza late Tuesday.

The miners barricaded the highway to protest the closure of gold processing plants.

Dureza arrived at the Bincungan Bridge in Carmen, Davao del Norte, just as police, backed by Army soldiers, were preparing to disperse the miners and their families who barricaded the highway that connects Southern Mindanao to Metro Manila.

Dureza was able to convince the miners and their supporters to clear the highway and hold negotiations.

Represented by lawyer Cresdan Bangoy, the miners initially wanted to open only one lane, but they later agreed to clear the highway and allow commuters to pass.

Since Monday, commuters had to endure a 20-kilometer detour to be able to reach their destinations.

Some 5,000 miners blocked the highway to demand the lifting of a cease and desist order issued by Monkayo Mayor Joel Brillantes on gold processing.

The miners also demanded the cancellation of a memorandum of agreement entered into by Southeast Mindanao Gold Mining Corp. and JB Management and Mining Corp.

The agreement provides that only SMGMC and JB would operate in the gold rush area of Mt. Diwalwal. Brillantes owns JB Mining.

Brillantes had repeatedly rejected appeals for him to lift the order saying he was only protecting the environment. Interior Secretary Jose Lina also tried to persuade the mayor, but his appeal was rejected.

"The CDO will continue over my dead body," Brillantes told Lina.

He said it was a pity that the small miners allowed themselves to be used by their bigger counterparts.

As the dialogue moves here, Acting Mayor Luis Bonguyan held an emergency meeting with police and military officials.

Bonguyan said it was possible that the protesters would mass in the city to dramatize their protest.

However, Joel Virador, spokesperson of Bayan Muna, said the miners would stay in Bincungan.

Bayan Muna is one of the militant groups supporting the miners' cause.

Anthony S. Allada and Ayan C. Mellejor, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Leyte 'Penitentes' keep 100-yr-old tradition of Lenten penance alive

By Vicente S. Labro
PDI Visayas Bureau

DESPITE suffering from a limp and slurred speech after a stroke eight years ago, Lesmes Militante refuses to renege on a vow of penance.

This Lent, Militante, 62, again dons the garb of the Penitentes, an all-male Church fraternity—a long sleeve robe that touches the ground, a hood with holes for the eyes, a rosary dangling from the neck and a white cord tied around the waist.

Fr. Pantaleon de la Fuente organized the Penitentes in 1894 to discourage locals from whipping themselves as a form of penance.

Self-flagellation then was gaining followers in Palo, Leyte, alarming the parish priest and the Catholic faithful.

Fr. De la Fuente brought in from Barcelona the original Penitente robes and hoods and religious statues for the Holy Week observance.

The Penitentes' attire was patterned after those being worn then by some penitents in Spain although currently, such a clothing would conjure up images of the Ku Klux Klan.

The similarity, however, ends in the attire.

Barefoot and wearing their attire under the heat of the sun, the Penitentes pray individually or by group to ask for forgiveness from God.

Group leader

For many years now, Militante is the group's leader in his home village of Luntad and nearby Barangay St. Michael.

But his appeal is such that penitentes of other villages want him to be their leader.

"I have nearly 200 penitentes under me," he said.

Militante has also been recruiting new members for years now. He currently has 45 recruits.

On March 9, the recruits prayed at the cemetery and the next day, they climbed Mt. Guinhangdan as their initiation rites.

The rites may be scary to some but to the fraternity these measure the sincerity of a recruit.

Members are recruited from the villages.

Once the applicant passes screening at the *cabecilla* level, he has to join other recruits for orientation and initiation rites in Palo.

Militante says there are only two things recruits must be good at—praying and learning their duties and responsibilities.

He said the group doesn't accept men who live with women out of wedlock. "We also do not accept people who are drug addicts or who look like one," he said. The ban extends to young people who sport long hair or wear earrings and who refuse to give up the extra hair or the earrings.

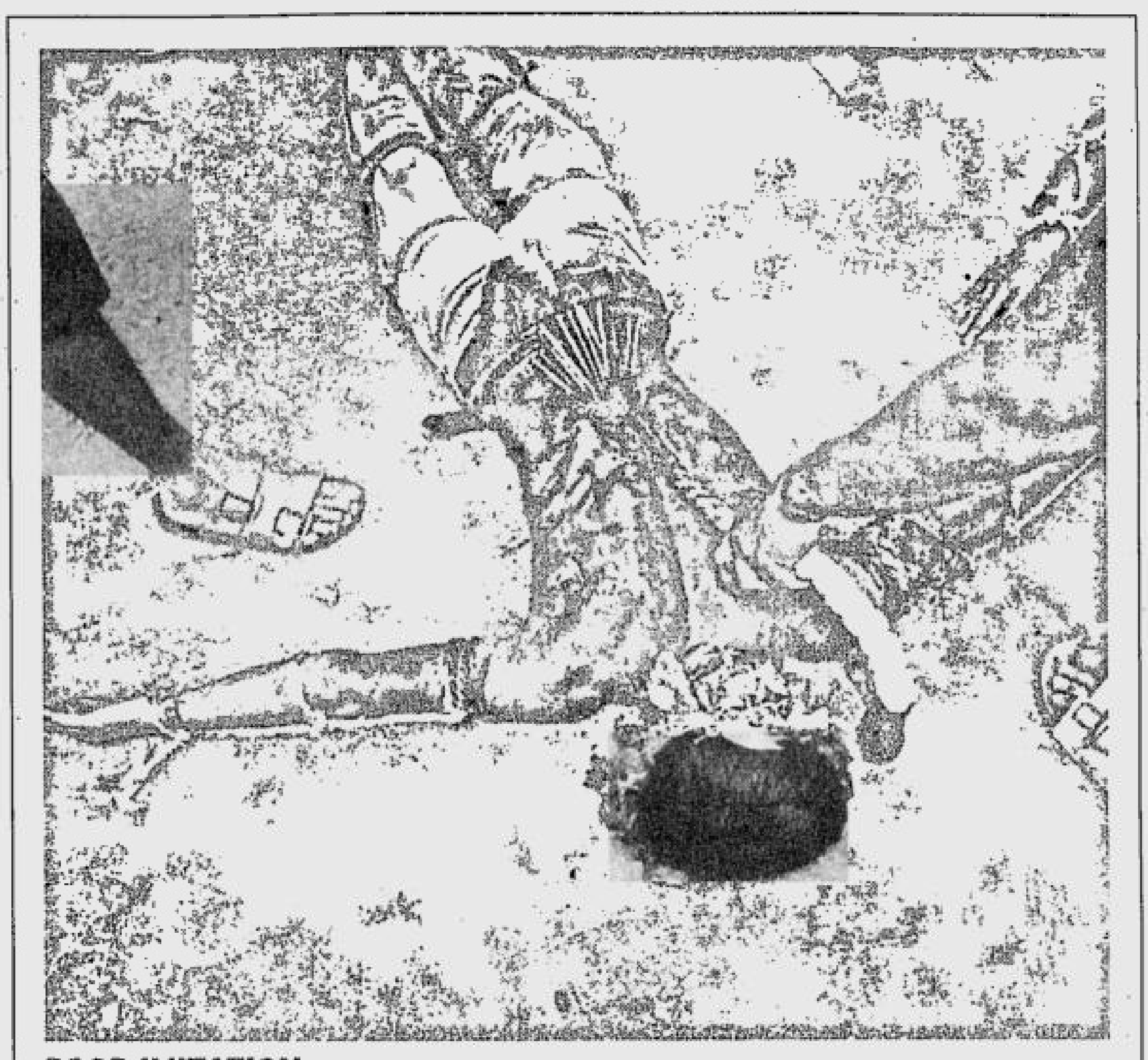
Men who drink liquor or gamble are advised not to indulge in these vices, especially during Holy Week.

Militante, who never married, worked in the town's convent for 14 years and at the Archbishop's Palace for eight years. He says he joined the Penitentes when he was 25 "because (he) want(ed) to serve God and to sacrifice" to atone for his sins.

"There were only more than 20 Penitentes then," he said.

Talisman

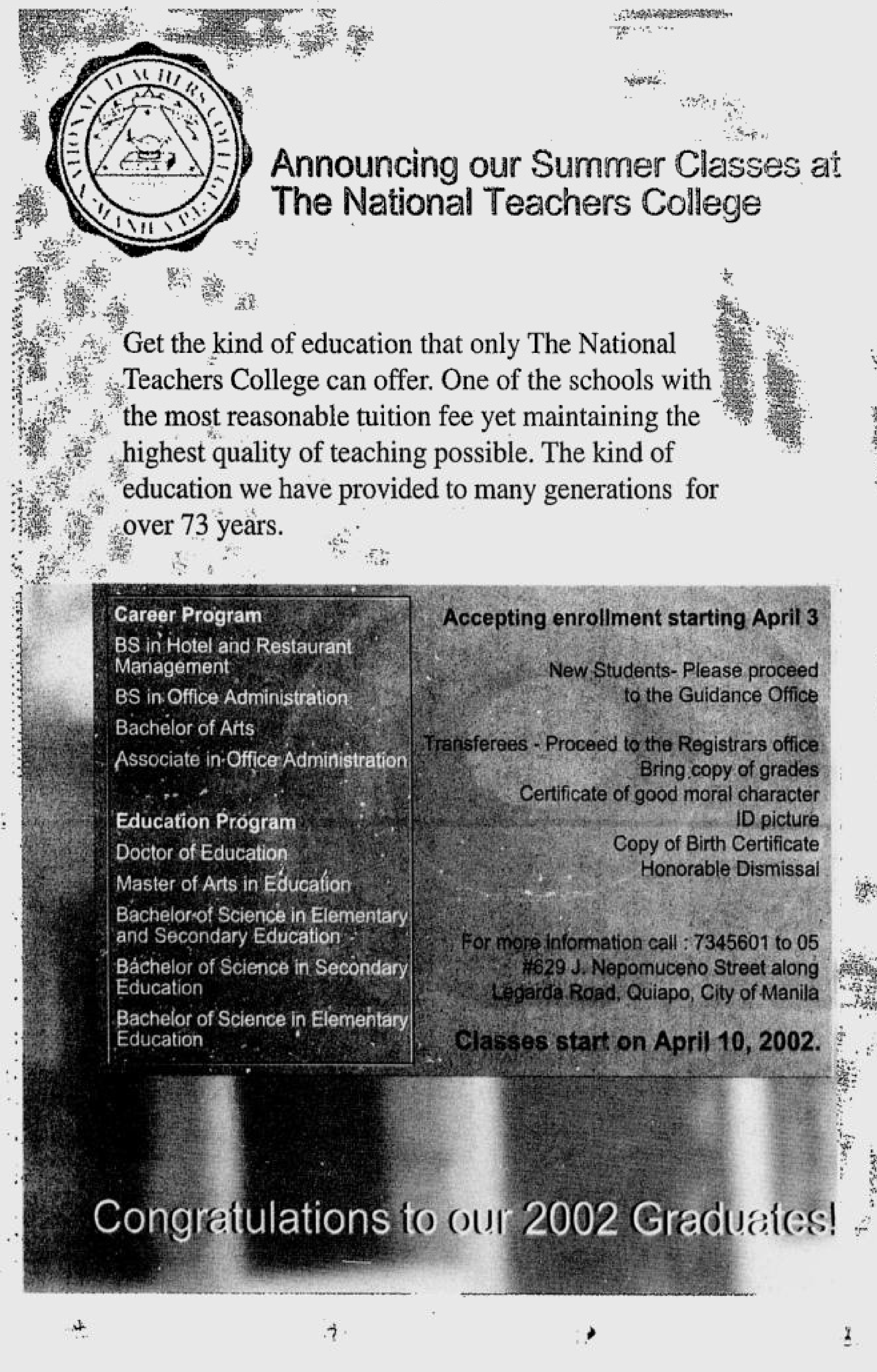
Currently, this all-male penitentiary group in Palo has a membership of more than 800. And their number is expected to increase as fathers pass on to their sons the tradition while others join to fulfill their vows of penitence.



POOR IMITATION

GIORGIA FLORIO

Every Holy Week, men who try to understand the life of Christ go out into the streets to have themselves flogged and even nailed to the cross, just like this man in Cutud, Pampanga.



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Lack of funds forces ports office to defer reclamation near Silliman

By Alex V. Pal
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—The Philippine Ports Authority (PPA) has deferred its proposed reclamation project worth about P130 million in Dumaguete due to lack of funds.

PPA regional manager Manuel Gorme told the INQUIRER that the PPA central office decided to defer the project two weeks ago.

But, he added, they were pursuing the paperwork in the processing of their application for an Environmental Compliance Certificate because they had already started it.

Still, Gorme said they could not start the project due to lack of funds even if they secured an ECC for the reclamation project.

The PPA planned to reclaim 1.3 hectares of the sea in front of the Silliman University to build a fastferry terminal, despite objections mostly from Silliman alumni.

Groups opposed to the project have been collecting signatures from fellow Dumagueteños. They have also been sending petitions to the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and to Malacañang to stop the PPA from pushing through with its plan.

The Silliman alumni and some environmentalist groups were against the project because it would affect the façade of the Silliman University campus and the city's famous landmark, the 800-meter long Rizal Boulevard that faces the sea.

The area to be reclaimed is also remembered by the veterans as the place where the bodies of their comrades were dumped by Japanese executioners, who stayed at the historic Silliman Hall.

The project would also destroy corals that support the subsistence of fishermen living on the shores of Dumaguete.

The DENR's Environmental Management Division was waiting for the PPA to submit the required certification from six government agencies to support the PPA's contention that the project would not harm the environment.

These agencies are the Provincial Environment and Natural Resources Office, the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, the City Tourism Office, the Philippine Astrological Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration, the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology and the National Historical Institute.

Of these six agencies, only the Phivolcs has yet to submit a reply to the PPA.

The NHI said it would consider the PPA's request for a certification only after a historical study had been made on the impact of the project to the "mutual satisfaction" of all parties concerned.

The other agencies had given a positive recommendation.

9, including city treasurer, charged with electricity theft

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The City Legal Office (CLO) has recommended the filing of charges against nine persons, including the city treasurer and a barangay chief, for alleged power pilferage.

Engineer Dan Edgar Caipang, the chair of Task Force Boltahe, was tasked to file charges against City Treasurer Romeo Manikan, Ray Bercelis, Rosario Priolo, Cynthia Elon, Rey Esteves, Norly Otocan, Laarna Avelino, Henry Ravino and Tomas Catajay.

The nine appeared in the Aug. 8, 2001 report of the task force as those who were allegedly found to have illegal power connection, in violation of Republic Act 7832 or the Anti-Electricity Pilferage Act of 1994. The task force was formed to monitor illegal power connections in the city.

Bercelis, the barangay chief of Concepcion, was mentioned in the report as having allowed the "tapping of electricity from the barangay hall."

The recommendation to file charges against the nine was in an eight-page report made by the CLO's ad hoc committee that investigated the controversy this month.

The investigation came after the report was leaked to media in January. Reporters began to ask questions on why no charges were filed against the nine.

The report was endorsed to City Legal Officer Cirilo Ganzon who submitted it to Mayor Jerry Treñas.

GMA opens Baguio art exhibit

WHEN President Macapagal-Arroyo opens the art exhibit "Guhit" at the Baguio Country Club today, she will receive a pleasant surprise.

The outstanding works of art, best described as realism, strike the viewer as if flowers, children, wildlife, and pastoral scenes, 63 paintings and sculptures in all, were captured outdoors in full color, and brought indoors to delight audiences.

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INQUIRER Southern Luzon
Editor **Jun Bandayrel** ◎ *Bureau Chief* **Floreño G. Solmirano**

Tia Tane's realm of the spirits

By Roly Embile
Tabaco City

BRIEFLY pausing from a silent ritual inside her dimly lit house, Cayetana Brotamonte faced a crucifix on a makeshift altar and dipped her right index finger into an oil lamp near it.

Gently, she ran her deft fingers on the back of 2-year-old Dexter Ticao held in the arms of her grandmother.

In circular strokes, the massage was repeated on the child's belly and was over in less than five minutes.

As if on cue, Dexter appeared to breathe easier and feel better than when he was brought in, complaining of stomach cramps.

Brotamonte pocketed the few coins clasped in her palm, then attended to other "patients."

Anyone seeking comfort from an ailment need not mention to a *sikad-sikad* or pedicab driver more than the name of Tia Tane, mother of Bentong, to be taken to Brotamonte's yet unfinished house in Barangay Bangkilingan in the suburb of Tabaco City in Albay.

Both names are widely familiar there.

She is better known as Tia Tane, 75, the trusted *maghihilot* (masseuse) in town who has even become more popular with the appearance of her son Bentong, with his funny gags, in the noontime television show "*Magandang Tanghali Bayan.*"

Tia Tane treats sprains, massages aching muscles and other discomforts as a *parahilot*, the Bicol term for the *manghihilot* in Tagalog.

"I take on people from virtually all over the province and of all ages—the oldest, a 91-year-old woman, and the youngest, month-old babies," she said in Bicol.

She said her clients come from Legazpi City, Tiwi, Malinao and other neighboring towns in Bicol, and even from as far as Manila.

But the one she proudly remembers was a Filipina immigrant to the United States.

"She told me she had been to doctors and specialists in America, but she never found a cure until she came to me. Then she went back to America and was happy to report that she had successfully conceived and given birth," she said. She did not specify the woman's illness.

Appeasement

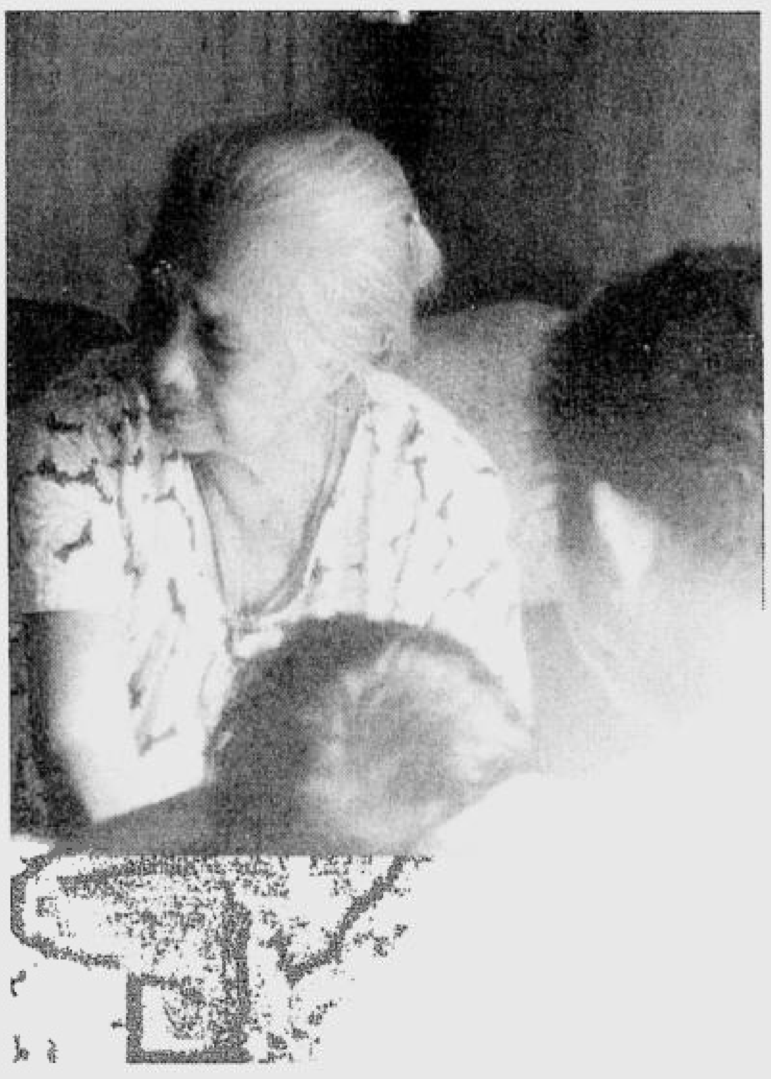
The more serious thing Tia Tane does, however, is the *santiguar* or persuading an offended *tawong lipod* (unseen spirit) to lift its painful and often debilitating curse on human trespassers.

"Many people are simply careless about the things they do that trespass on areas where the *tawong lipod*, unseen but very similar to us, dwell. Many people urinate, defecate or even simply pass through areas, which are considered offending," she said.

The spirits, she added, have the power to cast a powerful and painful retribution against such affronts called the *ungman* (curse).

Tia Tane said she does not provide a cure for the *ungman* but simply acts as medium and go-between of the people and the spirits.

"Just like us, the spirits have varying characters and temperaments. Some take slights lightly (like a simple stomach pain for urinating on its dwelling without the acceptable "*tabi*," or "*tabi, tabi po*" (please, excuse me) among the Tagalogs, and can easily forgive, but others exact graver penalties and do not let go easily," she said.



ROLY EMBILE/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

CAYETANA 'Tia Tane' Brotamonte

Most of the *ungman* are less serious, which simple rites of *santiguar* can almost instantly cure.

In its simpler form, the *santiguar* is performed with an opening silent prayer for God's help.

The presence of the *ungman* can be ascertained *in* two ways. One makes use of an enamel-coated plate lined with coconut oil on one side, which is then held over a lighted candle. The soot is read like an X-ray plate.

The other method makes use of a 1964 ten-centavo coin, which is made to stand on its edge over the metal plate.

If the coin stands, the patient is positive for the *ungman*; if not, he is promptly requested to see a doctor.

Difficult case

Tia Tane recounted one difficult case involving a middle-aged Chinese-Filipino businessman who came to her for help after he had exhausted all medical help available to him.

She said she seldom gets her patients' names and other personal circumstances, except in difficult cases, and almost never tell them to other people.

"I told him that (the soot formation on) the plate revealed a fallen tree. Only then did he admit that he recently ordered the cutting of an old tree in a lot he had just bought," she said.

She told him that the spirit in the fallen tree got so mad that he was not that easy to appease.

In such a case, she recommended that the offender make amends through the *tulod*, an offering of prayers, food and animal sacrifice.

In the *tulod* she made on a Friday, she slit a chicken's throat and let its blood drip over the stump of the fallen tree but to no avail.

Another attempt was made the following Friday with an offering of fruits, but still the *ungman* remained.

It was not until after the third try of more food and prayers did the spirit get appeased.

During all those offerings, Tia Tane confessed to having felt in her body the wrath of the mad spirit, which, she said, could have even killed her or her patient.

Miraculous tool

Other than her coin, plate and candles, Tia Tane's most-prized possessions include the antique crucifix, which is housed in a wood-and-glass case.

The foot-high crucifix, its flaking paint darkened to deep brown by the soot of a constantly burning oil lamp, is flanked by the wooden images of the Sacred Heart and the Virgin Mary placed on a makeshift altar.

She said the crucifix was once considered miraculous after her mother almost drowned while rescuing it from being swept away by flood caused by a series of typhoons occurring on three consecutive Fridays.

"Many people who touched its mysteriously sweating body were cured of their illnesses," she said.

Another indispensable material to her healing work is the especially concocted coconut oil, which fuels her altar lamp and is used in most of her chores as *parahilot*.

The season of Lent, specifically the Holy Week, lends a period for renewal to the widowed healer. The preparation of the oil, gathered from some 20 selected coconuts, is done only on Good Friday.

She said the oil is kept in a sealed vessel and opened for first use on Easter Sunday.

High price to pay

With sadness, Tia Tane feels certain that the gift of healing she so diligently learned from her maternal grandfather, Pacifico Briz, would have no taker after she is gone.

"It is a very difficult decision to make, whether one will accept responsibility for this challenge or not," she said.

Facing the prospect of not drawing the interest of any one of her 11 children and relatives to her vocation both saddened and relieved her.

"It is so hard because one has to go through the painful sacrifice of losing a dear member of the family similar to a family who dedicates a member to the priesthood and loses another," she said.

She said that when she started working as a *hilot*, she had to go through the painful passage with the death of two of her young children.

Now feeling weak and complaining of pain in certain parts of her body, Tia Tane said she has been taking it easy after a recent bout with hypertension. For the first time, she had to see a doctor and stay in a hospital.

In over 50 years of being a *parahilot* and *parasantiguar*, she has nothing to show from the pittance she has received for her efforts. "But I was never in this work for the money," she said.

She said she was glad that her show biz son Domingo, who is known on TV as Bentong, has been a big help. He regularly sends her money and helps her build their new house, she said.

126-YEAR-OLD

Leaning lighthouse of Lobo now a treasure

By Mei Magsino
Lobo, Batangas

NEARLY five years after the controversial Yamashita treasure hunting that had the front yard of the Malabrigo lighthouse in Lobo, Batangas, dug up, the 126-year-old structure is now leaning—threatening its function, but raising its tourism value, if saved on time.

Residents living near the lighthouse at Barangay Malabrigo can still remember the summer nights in 1997 when they saw truckloads of earth from the lighthouse area go down the mountain road.

The trucks came from the digging in front of the Malabrigo lighthouse, then rumored as the place where part of the Yamashita treasure was hidden.

Some residents even called broadcaster-turned-senator Noli de Castro's Magandang Gabi Bayan program to investigate the diggings.

Although the researchers and cameramen of the TV program did not prove any excavation, the word spread that the famed treasure was being dug up.

Renovation

Fernando de Mesa, 51, who has been the lighthouse operator since 1999, said he was already working at the lighthouse when the controversial diggings happened.

"The only diggings that happened here were when the Japanese International Cooperation Agency funded the repair of the lighthouse. The lighthouse was renovated and the old machines were replaced by solar panels. So now, it runs on solar energy," De Mesa recalled.

The lighthouse's machines, he added, used to be powered by diesel. But now everything is automated and is powered by the sun.

Eusebio Mendoza, 65, the lighthouse chief in 1997, said the lighthouse today appeared the same as it was when he first arrived in town.

"The diggings in 1997," Mendoza recalled, "were for the underground cables that connect the machines to the solar panels below. If there was any Yamashita treasure there, I could have been rich now. And I wouldn't be able to retire the other year with good record."

Mendoza now lives on a lighthouse keeper's pension in Barangay Malabrigo.

Treasure

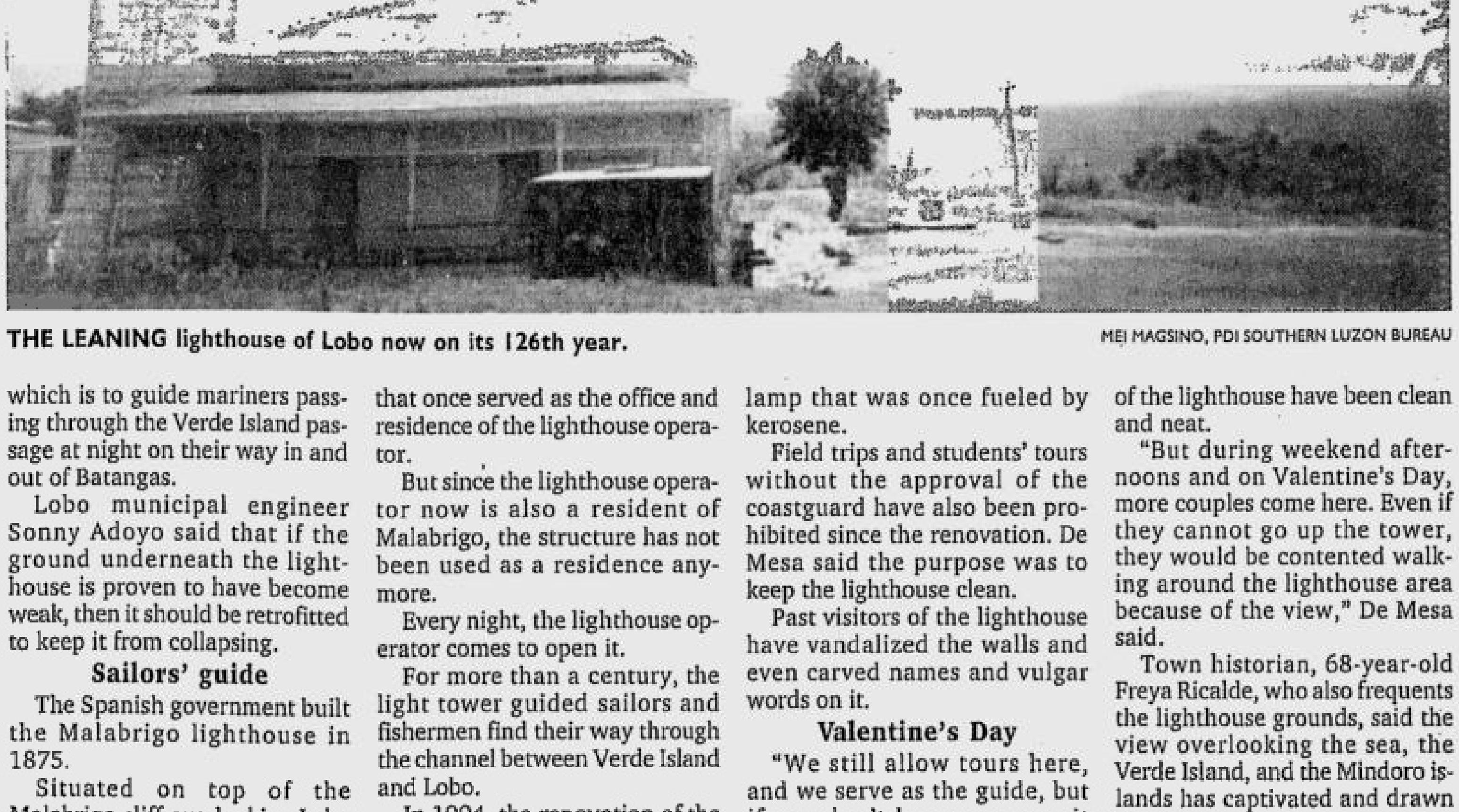
Lobo Mayor Renato Perez said the leaning of the lighthouse might have been caused by several factors: its age, the past earthquakes, and the water well beside the lighthouse.

"The lighthouse is already 126 years old. And maybe the well beside it has caused the ground below its foundation to weaken," Perez said.

He said the lighthouse is considered one of Lobo's treasures and a potential tourist spot if developed by the Department of Tourism.

"We really want to develop it, but then again, the problem is the budget. Developing the area would entail a big amount of money. Besides, the lighthouse is a property of the coastguard," the mayor said.

Should the lighthouse collapse, it would lose its primary function, which is to guide mariners passing through the Verde Island passage at night on their way in and out of Batangas.



THE LEANING lighthouse of Lobo now on its 126th year.

MEI MAGSINO, PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Lobo municipal engineer Sonny Adoyo said that if the ground underneath the lighthouse is proven to have become weak, then it should be retrofitted to keep it from collapsing.

Sailors' guide

The Spanish government built the Malabrigo lighthouse in 1875.

Situated on top of the Malabrigo cliff overlooking Lobo bay, it has a foundation that was built of strong square rocks crafted especially to withstand the strongest storms and typhoons at that time.

Beside the tower is a structure that once served as the office and residence of the lighthouse operator.

But since the lighthouse operator now is also a resident of Malabrigo, the structure has not been used as a residence anymore.

Every night, the lighthouse operator comes to open it.

For more than a century, the light tower guided sailors and fishermen find their way through the channel between Verde Island and Lobo.

In 1994, the renovation of the lighthouse started when JICA provided P12 million to rehabilitate the tower.

Solar cells were installed and a more powerful and accurate mercury light replaced the old lamp that was once fueled by kerosene.

Field trips and students' tours without the approval of the coastguard have also been prohibited since the renovation. De Mesa said the purpose was to keep the lighthouse clean.

Past visitors of the lighthouse have vandalized the walls and even carved names and vulgar words on it.

Valentine's Day

"We still allow tours here, and we serve as the guide, but if you don't have any permit from the coastguard, you can't tour here. I don't want to risk losing my job just because some people want to look around," he added.

Since the strict policy, the walls of the lighthouse have been clean and neat.

"But during weekend afternoons and on Valentine's Day, more couples come here. Even if they cannot go up the tower, they would be contented walking around the lighthouse area because of the view," De Mesa said.

Town historian, 68-year-old Freya Ricalde, who also frequents the lighthouse grounds, said the view overlooking the sea, the Verde Island, and the Mindoro islands has captivated and drawn tourists to the area.

"That may be because here you don't have to go to Italy to see the leaning tower of Pisa. We already have the leaning lighthouse of Lobo. This one's better," Ricalde said.

Guingona recounts humiliation in Mexico

From page A1

Development in Monterrey, Mexico.

Guingona said he did not ask for the invitation.

Guingona, who led the Philippine delegation, went through the reception line where he was greeted by the governor and his wife. At the end of the reception line, Guingona said, a Mexican lady official "asked me for my name and country." The lady said, "Your table is No. 5." At the time, no one was seated around the table, so Guingona decided not to take his seat and to talk to the other diplomats while waiting for the heads of state to arrive.

When it was time to take their seats, the same official told Guingona, "Sorry, the seats are only for heads of state." Another official interrupted saying to Guingona, "You are supposed to be here. You are representing the President (of the Philippines)." The two officials talked. The final answer was that the seats were "only for heads of state."

"If you did not invite me, I would not have come," Guingona said. He then left the reception. On the way out, he met Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra of Thailand, who asked, "Where are you going?" Guingona said, "I am going, you are coming."

One of the guests on Table 5 was Bush. Guingona said he did not interpret the fiasco as a result of his differences with President Macapagal-Arroyo over the terms of reference of the Balikatan 02-1, ostensibly aimed at wiping out the Abu Sayyaf, identified by the US government as part of the al-Qaida terrorist international network.

Bush was not present at the luncheon. He arrived at the conference at 3 p.m.

Downgrading historic ties

Guingona told the Inquirer that steps for diplomatic retaliation against Mexico, including downgrading their historic ties forged by three centuries of the Galleon Trade, were being considered unless the Mexican foreign ministry handed an apology not to himself for the affront but to the Philippine government and the Filipino people. He will not accept anything less than a written apology from the foreign ministry.

Up until yesterday, he said he was not aware the Mexican government had made an apology. Efforts to make an apology through lower channels—by Mexican Ambassador to Manila, Enrique Hubbard—have been rejected by the Department of Foreign Affairs as insufficient, condescending and even rubbing salt on the wound.

Awkward beginning

The diplomatic row between two countries with a long Spanish heritage of colonization, culture and trade in an era of mercantilism also marked an awkward beginning for Hubbard, who has just been accredited to Manila, and for the new Filipino ambassador to Mexico, Justo Orros.

Orros, who was in Los Angeles, at the time of the incident, has been instructed not to take his post in Mexico and is likely to be recalled to Manila if the incident is not resolved to save the injured pride of Guingona, as well as of the Philippine government which has backed Guingona's walkout.

Guingona also said President Fidel Castro of Cuba did not attend the reception. He had left for Cuba after delivering a speech at the plenary. Guingona said he had heard unverified rumors that Castro had been told that Bush was uncomfortable with Castro. However, before he left, Castro made a sideswipe at the conference. He said he was leaving his head of parliament, with the request that "in all aspects (of the conference) please treat him as if he were me."

Boycott of state dinner

Guingona boycotted the state dinner hosted by Mexican President Vicente Fox. Guingona's wife, Ruth, did not attend the program for visiting wives of dignitaries, hosted the following day by the Mexican first lady.

Guingona said that Ambassador Hubbard's and Governor Carriond's offer of apology that the incident "was not intended" did not make up for the affront to the Philippine government and people, emphasizing that he was representing Ms Macapagal.

Not only did the President back Guingona. Unlike in the internal fissures in the Cabinet over Balikatan, the government closed ranks behind him. The irony of the fiasco is that it did not stem from trade or political issues, hardly a source of tensions given that trade between the Philippines and Mexico is negligible.

Mexico is locked into the Nafta (North American Free Trade Arrangement) with the United States and Canada as a trading bloc. More than 90 percent of its trade is with the United States.

Priests deserve a resting place of dignity

From page A1

WELL-DESERVED rest provided by the Libingang Bantayog ng Kakatha, a cemetery for priests who were natives of Hagonoy, Bulacan.

JOAN BONDOC

fraternity of priests born and raised in the small Bulacan town of Hagonoy.

To ensure that those who have served the Lord would inherit a piece of earth, Vengco built the Libingang Bantayog ng Kakatha, a small cemetery for priests from Hagonoy.

The cemetery is arguably the first of its kind in the country since it serves a particular group of priests of coming from the same hometown.

Levitical town

It is fitting that Hagonoy is the cemetery's site as it prides itself as a "levitical" town, having produced a great number of priests, 65 at last count, according to Vengco.

Until 1971 when Msgr. Jose Aguinaldo formed Kakatha, the departed Hagonoy clergymen were scattered far in different dioceses in the country. Through the fellowship, Aguinaldo, who was parish priest of Hagonoy from 1968 to 1991, enabled them to retrace the roots of their priesthood in the flood-prone Bulacan town where their calling began.

In the early 1980s, Kakatha began collecting the bones of priests from Hagonoy who were buried elsewhere. Kakatha buried the bones of its native sons in a corner of the public cemetery located behind the St. Anne National Shrine at the town's *poblacion*.

When he became president of Kakatha, Vengco expanded the "corner" into a 300-square-meter plot. The cemetery now looks like a mausoleum where priests share equal space and importance. A modest arc draws visitors into the large concrete graves situated on both sides of the cemetery. The remains of the priests are later transferred to niches behind the tabernacle at the end of the cemetery after a few years.

There are 30 priests memorialized in the cemetery, which was inaugurated last January through funding from Sen. Blas Ople, himself a Hagonoy native, and the San Miguel Corp.

Among the priests are Fr. Marcelo Capati who was kidnapped by the Huks. He shares an epitaph with Fr. Ben Carreon, the popular media priest who started a series of "Joke Only" books, revolutionary priest Mariano Sevilla and several other Hagonoy clergymen.

Mission

In the absence of a concrete Church program for sick or dying priests, Vengco founded the Kadiwa sa Pagkapari Foundation Inc., which provides a fellowship for old priests nationwide.

Kadiwa has offices in Quezon City and Antipolo where priests get to visit anytime and interact with other members of the clergy. Vengco says sick priests are not located under one roof "so they wouldn't feel abandoned."

Instead, Vengco and his "Epheseus angels" go from one house to another to deliver gifts and medicines to old priests. In the process, these angels, mostly seminarians, make them feel that they are not forgotten.

The foundation is now coordinating with government agencies and private firms to help shoulder the other needs of old priests. Vengco is eyeing Prudential Bank for a pension plan for clergymen. Funeraria Paz has agreed to provide free burial and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office has agreed to donate medicines, he adds.

With an attractive social security package, a foundation that cares and a cemetery that manifests the appreciation of the free services rendered by priests, Vengco hopes more young men would respond to the call of Christ.

1 priest for 80,000 people

Vengco has made it his personal mission to inspire seminarians to proceed with their vocation. Instead of heading a parish, he decided to become an educator and has been a "formator" for the past 37 years.

This is a Catholic country that's running out of priests. Vengco says the current ratio is stunning: one priest for 80,000 people.

Despite a substantial number of young men wanting to enter the priesthood, Vengco realized their numbers were not enough to accommodate the growing flock. "Many people want to become priests but poverty drives them away," he says. "They feel the need to support their family first."

Vengco says another reason has its roots in the Spanish colonial period. When the Spaniards introduced Christianity to the country, they kept the vocation exclusive and deliberately neglected to develop a Filipino clergy.

Vengco admits that those who decide to respond to the call of Christ are ultimately faced with the fear that like many of the old priests, they, too, when their time comes would die in solitude.

"It's quite ironic that after serving the Lord and His people for too long, priests would look miserable at the end of their lives," the priest says.

'Trauma straight from jaws of hell'

From page A1

in a position to know.

Saving the party from what? Allegedly from getting dismantled from within by a host of infiltrators. Or so, the victimizers imagined. How could a small group arrogate unto themselves the authority to think thus and do that? And perpetuate a horror of such magnitude unchecked till it was too late? Again the answer to that is so difficult to cram into a few sentences. But to be concrete, let's go back to how Adolf triggered it.

Adolf and Xantippe

Adolf, a district-level cadre catapulted into a front-level committee upon the recommendation of a naïve, shallow member of the regional party committee. For convenience' sake, let's call her Xantippe. Adolf I didn't love. Xantippe, too, I didn't love. She's unlovable because she had so many blind spots, deep-seated personality issues that made her run roughshod over the sensibilities of others. So much so that a member of the regional party committee told her pointblank that she might need professional help from some of the best shrinks in the country. To think that she was in the committee that made decisions with long-term consequences. She was "*patrona*" of Adolf whom she thought was a deep thinker, an excellent worker. But in truth, Adolf excelled only in spinning fantasies (*"maglubid ng dila, ng isip na hinugot sa haka-haka"*).

Adolf of a district-level cadre competence, catapulted prematurely into a front-level committee via a subtle patronage system that crept, unobserved, into the regional committee. This Adolf directed the Great Abomination that devastated my region!

Xantippe came to her senses only when, under the direction of Adolf, she herself was arrested and chained under the "*haka-haka*" (speculative) charge that she was a deep penetration agent (DPA). Adolf himself subjected her to psychological torture. The irony of it was that she and Adolf were fond of Robert Ludlum—whom no one but no one of the cadres read because they had so much other useful things to read.

Don't ask me how the Oplan Missing Link (OPML) and the Ahos started. I can only give, with the greatest reluctance, what I myself observed or discovered about the facts of the case in the region of my deployment. I say it with the greatest reluctance because you, in the media, just want a story crammed into a small space measured in ems for a voyeuristic public. (OPML refers to the purge in Southern Luzon. Ahos—which means garlic—was the earlier purge in Mindanao. Hundreds of cadres were believed to have been executed by their comrades. OPML survivor Robert Francis Garcia wrote in detail about his ordeal in his book "To Suffer Thy Comrades.") I can only scratch the surface, or rather, the tips of the roots—*"sanga-sanga"*—of the Great Abomination.

Like Greek tragedy

Adolf of the wild Ludlumesque imagination, was only the trigger, a self-directed trigger at that, of the Great Abomination that happened in my region. There were a number of others who were not self-directed but just as culpable, who got themselves dragged into the trigger machine. But Adolf was more than a trigger. He was an indicator, among oh so many other indicators of the tragic flaw—yeah, as in Greek tragedy—in the nationwide revolutionary organization.

And that's why the Great Abomination happened in different places at different times. Ahos was Act II, OPML was Act III. I know of a first act, small but front-level scale. But this first one was nipped in the bud when the regional committee that had authority over that front learned early enough for a prompt intervention. Act II and III had a lot of complications that, tragically, delayed intervention by the proper organs of authority.

All three were not authorized by the duly-constituted organs. "*Paano nakalusot*" (How did it come to pass)? Aye, there's the rub! I'll need hours and hours to describe that, which is pointless and unnecessary for your purposes.

What's important for all of us, and for the victims especially—that's what they themselves said—was that, one, these were not authorized but were aberrations. Two, that due penalties and restitution were done. Three, and most important of all, the third time the abomination happened, the rooting out of the causes was more incisive, (and) the measures undertaken to prevent a recurrence were therefore much more reliable.

I learned from unofficial sources that in Act III the regional party cadres who were left behind to continue the crisis intervention tried their very best to reach the victims who did not belong to that region—but it was no longer possible.

Adolf directed one line of work among the youth and student sector in the main urban centers of the region. His work was suffering from a lot of setbacks. Dwindling national democratic activists, key activists tending to get themselves isolated, dismal failure to lead progressive forces in a flagship university, etc. What he could not see was that they, and he himself, had deep-seated weaknesses in work style, and tactics and organizing design had crucial faults. What he did not realize was something all the other cadres realized on hindsight much later on—that the entire revolutionary organization was suffering setbacks from an erroneous concept carried over from one region courtesy of Xantippe and adopted hook, line and sinker by the regional revolutionary center. Adolf conveniently found a reason for the setbacks, especially because of mounting security problems which were the result of weaknesses. So, (he must have thought) there must be deep penetration agents among us.

Comrades arrested

I will not go into the details but investigations led to arrests without the proper procedures demanded by CPP-NPA-NDF (Communist Party of the Philippines-New People's Army-National Democratic Front) policies. Investigations and "cross-examinations" early on were totally inept. Adolf, who supervised the first arrests of comrades and therefore based himself in the guerrilla zones, leaned on the party center—which was incomplete—who could assemble. Through *pangongonsensiya* (pricking the conscience) he was able to convince Rajah, the committee head, Crisanto, the gentle, good-natured head of the regional NPA command, and Xantippe, to undertake the investigations because he had no authority. For all of them, work came to a standstill. As more suspects came up, they needed to set up a special task force and a fairly large army formation to secure the camp.

Soon there were "exposurists" from another region who became suspect. The regional party center had no authority over them. So they requested Jonah, a senior cadre in the national leadership who had a supervisory function over the region. Jonah was most reluctant but through *kakokonsensiya* ("*Buti ikaw diyan ligtas*—You've had it good; you're safe where you are") he came over. Jonah was aware of the illegal nature of the body but he had gotten so convinced by the specter of the party being taken over by DPAs that he assumed responsibility on behalf of the national party center! That's why the entire revolutionary organization of the region called this horror "*Kahibangan*" (madness).

The rest is history. Rajah, Xantippe and some other members of the regional party committee found themselves in chains. The national party center, far away and tied up with other crucial errors that were being corrected, compounded by compartmentalization of information, heard too late. They promptly intervened and saved the lives of a long list of innocent people.

Not a single DPA

My name was on the list but I was away somewhere. I never knew until the thing blew over. Ka Crisanto died in an accident in the effort to "secure" the very center of leadership of the party. Poor guy, one of the kindest, most guileless people I knew.

The national-level cadres who arrived immediately set the prisoners free. Victims were given first aid while the guys of the national center went about the sordid task of reviewing the record of investigation—every single line of it. At the end they announced with sorrow that there was not a single DPA on the list.

Mind you, when they intervened it was at the risk of their own lives. They called the entire revolutionary center of the region to report on the review process. Collectively all were able to pinpoint the root causes, sum up and take up the measures to eradicate the causes. Due process and hard penalties were given, short of the death penalty. Top-level cadres who were involved in the illegal task force were particularly hit hard by this. Cadres from elsewhere were deployed in the region to help pick up the pieces. The very limited finances were stretched, priorities were changed, to give restitution to the victims' families though we all knew that (nothing can) compensate for the value of a dead comrade and the loss of a son or daughter.

Unspeakable grief

I was one of those entrusted with the doleful task of helping process the victims—those whom we could reach—for healing, of breaking the news and consoling the bereaved families, while working for the overall recovery of the devastated region. I had to summon all my strength for this.

After I had returned to the convent I took a test for psychological burnout. There was none. If at all, it was physical, as a result of aging. When I came back my body was like the run-down jeepneys that ply the bumpy mountain roads. Yet my psychic energy was quite high.

Did I have dark nights of the soul? Like St. John of the Cross? No, I'm not holy like him. But . . . yes, I've had long dark nights of unspeakable grief. (Long pause) (Caused by) a collective trauma that suddenly fell from the sky. No, off the jaws of hell.

You're looking at scars I carry that are still raw, wounds underneath not fully healed, inflicted by people I love, by so many people I equally love.

Crucifixion

From page A1

nity in Cutud, San Fernando, Pampanga.

"No first-timers, all have been nailed before," Castro, who has supervised the event since 1986, told Reuters by phone.

The tradition, unique to the Philippines, has survived the ire of the country's powerful Church and draws thousands of spectators every year. ***(See related story on Page A2.)***

"This is our tradition. You cannot stop this tradition, not even the Pope," Castro said.

The ritual is held annually on a small hill surrounded by lush rice paddies, a scene somewhat different from the barren hill of Calvary where Jesus along with two thieves was crucified about 2,000 years ago.

There are no foreign volunteers this year, Castro said, unlike several years ago when a Belgian woman and a Japanese man also performed the ritual.

Some carry their own crosses to the hill. Hundreds of other believers parade through the streets, beating their backs with a clutch of short bamboo sticks attached to a thong, in a less severe but no less bloody form of penitence to atone for their sins.

Ruben Enaje will be playing the main role of Jesus Christ in the ritual, which has persisted in the past five decades, briefly interrupted only by Mount Pinatubo's eruption in 1991.

The 41-year-old house painter told the Inquirer as saying: "It deepened my faith in the Lord, gave me peace of mind amid poverty and shielded me and my family from harm."

Despite admonition from the Church in this predominantly Catholic country, Castro said these practices continue because it is part of tradition and a way for some individuals to show their penitence and sacrifice.

But the Church believes that such tradition misses the point.

Bishop Orlando Quevedo said in a statement: "Religious traditions and practices are still very strong . . . Unfortunately, our devotions during Holy (Easter) week seem to be merely emotional and ritualistic and do not transform our lives."

Reuters

Pinoy boxers compete in Europe

A SIX-MAN Team Caltex Philippines will compete in two international tournaments in Europe as part of the selection process of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines for the forthcoming Asian Games in Busan, South Korea. Abap president Manny Lopez said the six players will compete in the Gee Bee International Amateur Boxing Championships in Helsinki, Finland April 5-7.

SPORTS

Editor **Al S. Mendoza** ◉ Assistant Editor **Edwin M. Villanueva**

SPORTS ON TV

Compiled by Lorenzo Mangulat

TENNIS: Nasdaq 100 Open, Early Round Coverage Day #3 at 10 a.m. (r), Men's Quarterfinal Match #1 at 7:30 p.m., Match # 2 at 9:30 p.m. on Star Sports

GOLF: PGA - The Players Championship, Final Round at 2 p.m. (r), Highlights at 11:30 p.m. on Star Sports

RP bets face world-class field in 2 athletics events

GO

By Marc Anthony Reyes

HOMEGROWN heroes resume their buildup for the Busan Asian Games when they go up against world-class talents in two separate athletics events here in May.

The Milo National Invitational track and field championships-Gov. Sering Cup unreels May 1-4 showcasing athletes from 12 countries, including China and Russia at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex.

And then on May 26, the country will host the third and final leg of the inaugural Asian Amateur Athletics Association Grand Prix, a one-day extravaganza pitting only the best athletes in the region, also at the RMSC.

The Grand Prix invites only the top six athletes according Asian Amateur Athletic Association order of merit in 15 events. The host country enjoys the privilege of having two entries in each of the category.

The country's top bet, Eduardo Buenavista, gets a taste of Asian Games competition as he participates in long-distance events. He will face the likes of Zheng Kai of China, Japan's Satoshi Irifune and Takashi Maeda, Qatar's Ahmed Ibrahim Warsama and Nasser Sulaiman and Saad Shaddad Al-Asmari of Saudi Arabia in the event.

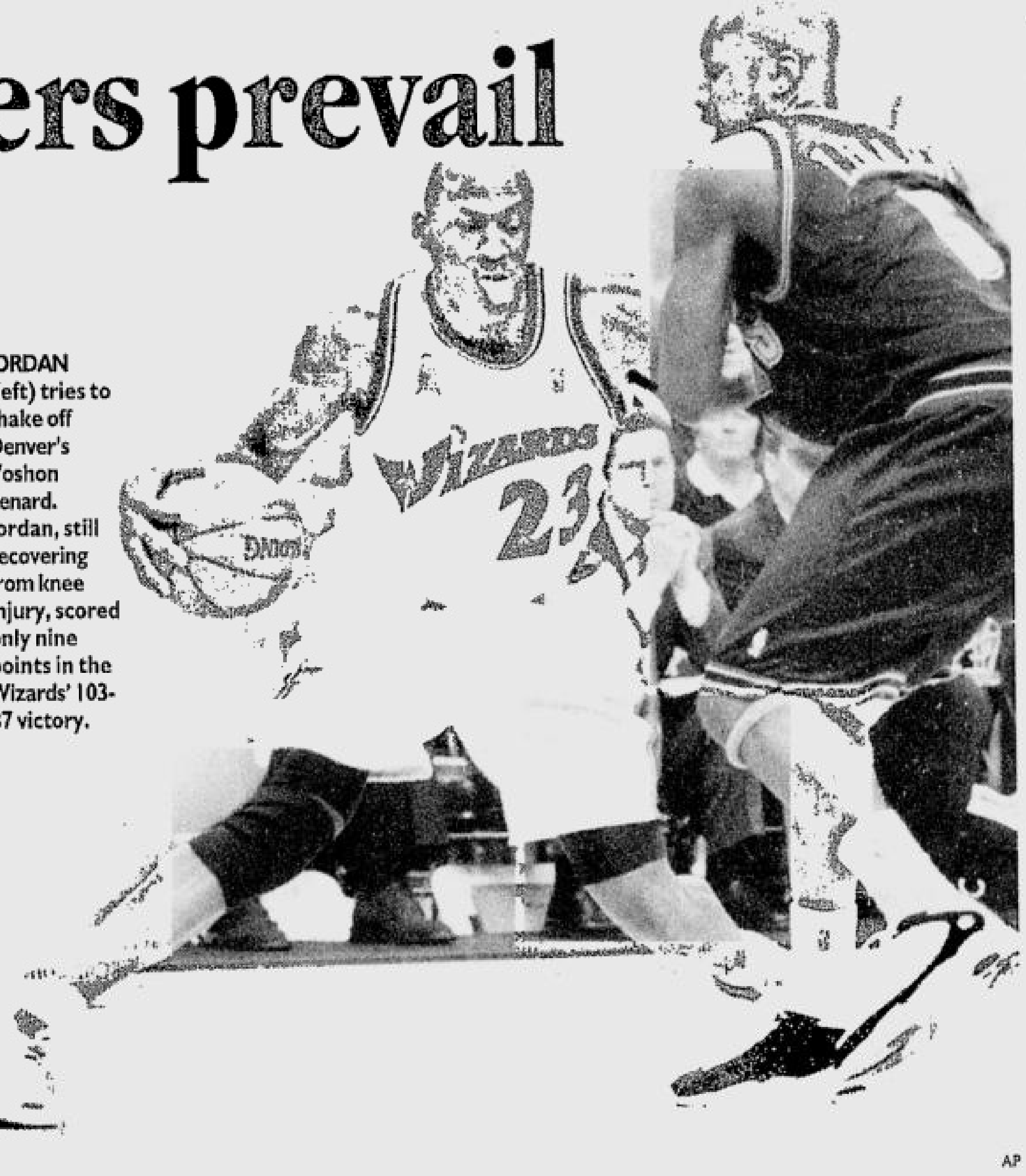
Organized by the Asian Amateur Athletic Association (4As), the one-day affair will have 15 events and offers $2,000 for the champion, $1,000 runner-up and $500 in each event.

The first two legs will be held in Hyderabad, India, on May 18, while the second leg will be on May 21, in Bangkok.

"We have been looking for tournaments where we could range our athletes with their possible rivals in the Asian Games. And this is the best occasion to gauge our chances in Busan," said athletics chief Go Teng Kok. "But this must also put a lot of pressure on our athletes because they will be competing in front of our countrymen."

Other Filipino bets seeing action in the twin events are John Lozada, Ernie Candelario, Fidel and Ernie Gallenero, Jimar Aing, Allan Ballester, Roy Vence, Emerson Obiena, Raphie Pilaspilas, Nixon Mas, Lerma Bulauitan, Christabel Martes, Percela Molina, Narcisa Atienza, Maristela Torres and Roselyn Hamero.

Whitney, Hamilton lead Wizards; Lakers prevail


JORDAN (left) tries to shake off Denver's Voshon Lenard. Jordan, still recovering from knee injury, scored only nine points in the Wizards' 103-87 victory.

AP

WASHINGTON—Chris Whitney and Richard Hamilton scored 22 points apiece as the Washington Wizards beat up the Nuggets for the second time in seven days, following last week's 32-point rout with a 103-87 victory in the NBA.

Tuesday's game was never that competitive as the Wizards pulled within 2 1/2 games of the Indiana Pacers, who lost 96-77 to Detroit. The Pacers hold the eighth and final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference, and the Wizards play nine of their remaining 11 games against teams with winning records.

Donnell Harvey had 18 points, and former Wizards forward Juwan Howard, booed every time he touched the ball, scored 17 to lead the Nuggets, who had a come-from-behind, one-point victory in New York the previous night.

Courtney Alexander scored 14 points and Etan Thomas had a career-high 13 for the Wizards, playing their first home game in two weeks.

Michael Jordan, who has never missed the playoffs in his career, wasn't needed much for this one. Still recovering from knee surgery, he came in as a substitute to play 20 minutes, scoring nine points on 4-for-9 shooting with six assists.

Lakers 121, Cavaliers 116

In Los Angeles, Shaquille O'Neal had 19 points and eight rebounds despite sitting out the last 16 minutes, and Rick Fox equaled a season-high with 18 points, as the Los Angeles Lakers beat Cleveland.

Kobe Bryant, the only Los Angeles starter to play in the fourth quarter, had 17 points and seven rebounds. The Lakers (50-20) won for the 15th time in 19 games and remained one-half game behind Sacramento in the race for the NBA's best record.

Ricky Davis scored a career-high 35 points, while Andre Miller had 21 points and nine assists for the Cavaliers, who have lost four straight and eight of 11.

Pistons 96, Pacers 77

In Indianapolis, Corliss Williamson scored 23 points before he was ejected near the end of the game, leading Detroit over Indiana.

Williamson and Pacers forward Jermaine O'Neal were thrown out after a confrontation under the Pistons' basket with 1:16 to play.

Williamson, driving the baseline, was fouled hard by O'Neal. Williamson bounced the ball off O'Neal's back and the two stood on the baseline jawing before O'Neal advanced on Williamson.

Chucky Atkins finished with 18 points while Clifford Robinson added 13 points and Jerry Stackhouse 12 for Detroit (42-28). Ben Wallace grabbed 14 rebounds.

Carter surgery

TORONTO—Vince Carter underwent arthroscopic surgery on his left knee and should be healthy by the start of next season.

"The surgery went well," Toronto Raptors surgeon Dr. Paul Marks said Tuesday. "We encountered minor findings of inflammation, but no major structural problems. We expect Vince to have a full recovery from the problems."

Complete results: Washington 103, Denver 87; Detroit 96, Indiana 77; Atlanta 103, New Jersey 77; Orlando 96, Chicago 82; Dallas 112, Milwaukee 106, OT; Golden State 115, Minnesota 106; Utah 109, Houston 105; Sacramento 107, L.A. Clippers 90; L.A. Lakers 121, Cleveland 116. *AP*

B'vista, Martes triumph

RECENT Adidas King of the Road (Hong Kong) champion Eduardo Buenavista ran a tactical race to beat the field in the Adidas Pharmaton 10K Run in Baguio City last Sunday.

The defending titlist clocked 37 minutes and 46 seconds to edge Allan Ballester, last year's Adidas King of the Road winner, who timed 37:57.

Roy Vence, the 2001 SEA Games marathon champion, settled for third in 38:01.

The Nationals didn't really pour it on to prevent injuries as they are in deep training for the Asian Games in Busan, South Korea this September.

In the distaff side, defending champion Cristabel Martes, fresh from a fifth place finish in the Standard Chartered Hongkong Marathon, outkicked Flor Cachero to win in 41:53. Cachero clocked 42:12 to place second while veteran Maria Elena Torcelino wound up third in 50:44.

Tourism officer Benny Alhambra representing Mayor Bernardo Vergara fired off over 550 runners in the race also co-sponsored by Rudy Project, Timex, Mountain King, Vacation Hotel Baguio and Osaka Iridology.

President's Cup starts

PARTICIPANTS in the President's Cup Regatta get to test their skills in the China Sea Race Series which starts today in Hong Kong.

Andy Soriano's Maligaya, entered in the premier cruising class, is the lone Filipino boat in the race that will end in Punta Fuego, Batangas.

Four foreign boats in the racing class have Filipino sailors. Neil Pride's Hi-Fidelity, second-placer in the 1999 and 2000 President's Cup Regatta, has three while David Hong's Hocux Pocux has five. Other boats with locals on board are Frank Pong's Jelik and Sam Chan's Free Fire. *AP*

BLAST FROM THE PAST

TODAY in 1993, Angelicum and Lourdes School beat their rivals to win the girls' and boys' titles, respectively, of the PSC-Pava National Inter Secondary Volleyball tournament at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. Also today in 1987, Francis Gaston and Wigberto Clavecilla tallied 68 points to power Luisita to its third straight crown in the 6th Valley Invitational interclub golf tournament.

Agassi rips Swede, gains last 8

AP

AGASSI slams a backhand to Johansson.

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida—American Andre Agassi, seeking his fifth Key Biscayne title and second in a row, beat eighth-seeded Swede Thomas Johansson 7-5, 6-2 to reach the quarterfinals of the Nasdaq-100 Open.

Agassi's absence from the Australian Open this year helped Johansson win his first Grand Slam title. Johansson wasn't so lucky Tuesday.

A wrist injury kept the ninth-seeded Agassi from bidding for his third consecutive Australian Open championship in January. He's 12-2 since returning and looked sharp against Johansson.

"It was definitely a letdown not playing Australia this year," Agassi said. "It's been a great place for me to get my year started. But now I've got a lot of energy, and I'm coming out of my shoes looking for competition."

Agassi's next opponent will be No. 20 Nicolas Lapentti of Ecuador, who beat Adrian Voinea of Romania 6-2, 3-6, 6-3.

No. 2 Venus Williams of the United States, seeking her fourth title in the event, became the first semifinalist by rallying past No. 12 Elena Dementieva or Russia 5-7, 6-3, 6-2. Williams overcame 48 unforced errors and 10 double faults to extend her winning streak on Key Biscayne to 22 matches.

Williams' next opponent will be the winner of the quarterfinal Wednesday between her sister Serena and two-time champion Martina Hingis of Switzerland. That match was postponed Tuesday night because of rain.

A sibling showdown would be the first between the sisters since Venus beat Serena in the US Open final last September.

By beating Dementieva, Venus extended her winning streak on Key Biscayne to 22 matches. She missed the 2000 event because of injury but won titles in 1998, 1999 and 2001.

Two men's fourth-round matches ended with injuries. No. 5 Tim Henman of Britain retired because of a stiff neck trailing No. 12 Swiss Roger Federer 6-2. Gaston Gaudio of Argentina quit with severe cramping trailing countryman Juan Ignacio Chela 6-1, 5-7, 4-3.

Henman hurt his neck when he collided with a stranger going through a doorway Monday.

Top-seeded Australian Lleyton Hewitt led American James Blake 6-4, 3-1 when their match was suspended until Wednesday because of rain.

Agassi and Johansson traded early service breaks to reach 3-3. Agassi, showing increasing confidence in his groundstrokes, broke again for a 6-5 lead and served out the set.

In the opening game of the second set, Agassi came up with the shot of the match to break yet again. *AP*

Baguio hosting dog show Saturday

THE NORTHERN Luzon German Shepherd Dog Asso will hold its 14th Landesgruppen Sieger Show at the Burnham Park in Baguio City on Saturday (March 30) starting at 8 a.m.

The series held by the NLGSDA annually under the leadership of Junn Vergara as chair and Glen de la Cruz as president, will have two to three more Landesgruppen shows in preparation for the Philippine National Sieger Show to be held this October.

The Black Saturday dog show will have Judge Goh En Khoon from Malaysia scrutinizing the Baguio-bred imports from Germany. The title Sieger Siegerin will be at stake.

Superb training, beauty and anatomy as well as power and movement will spell the difference for the selection of top Sieger and Siegerin.

The Male open class will be led by Iso Zellwaldrand, Baer Von Bann, Vito of Fairway, Fero Von Bann, Jasko Danischenhof, Hanno Dunischenke, Flop Rheinahue, and Baguio Sieger Dec. 2001-Kenzo Von Oasis.

Equally exciting and challenging will be the Female class led by Phil. 2000 Sigerin Kessa Piste Trophe, 2001 Siegerin Jassy Oxalis, V-12 and Baguio Siegerin Dec. 2001 Xolly Fichtenschlag.

More than 150 entries, including puppies, have registered for the meet so far. Entries will be accepted until 8 a.m. on March 30 at NLGSDA registration table at Burnham Park. Sponsors are Eukanuba, Happy Dog, Nutr Nuggets and Alpo. Interested parties may call 0920-2292101 and 0744422520.

Mayor expects big payoff from Tyson-Lewis fight

MEMPHIS, Tennessee —Welcoming the Lennox Lewis-Mike Tyson fight to Memphis has nothing to do with morality—it's about business.

"It's not in my job description to regulate the morality of individuals who participate in sporting events," Mayor Willie Herenton said Tuesday. "As mayor of this great city, I made a business decision. I think the city is going to benefit enormously."

Herenton lobbied for the fight after Nevada boxing authorities refused to allow it in Las Vegas, and promoters began looking at Washington, Detroit and Memphis.

Lennox and Tyson will fight June 8 at The Pyramid, the city's 20,400-seat downtown sports and entertainment arena overlooking the Mississippi River. Promoters were still working Tuesday on getting a $12.5 million line of credit to cover the site fee for the fight.

Last week, First Tennessee Bank refused a line of credit to Nashville-based promoting company Prize Fight Boxing for the fight, citing a "moral" issue. *AP*

New Subic raceway unveiled April 13

THE NEWLY upgraded Subic International Raceway will be unveiled to the motorsports community with the kickoff of the prestigious Asian Formula of Speed, the Petron-Grand Pix and the Philippine National Touring Car Championship on April 13-14.

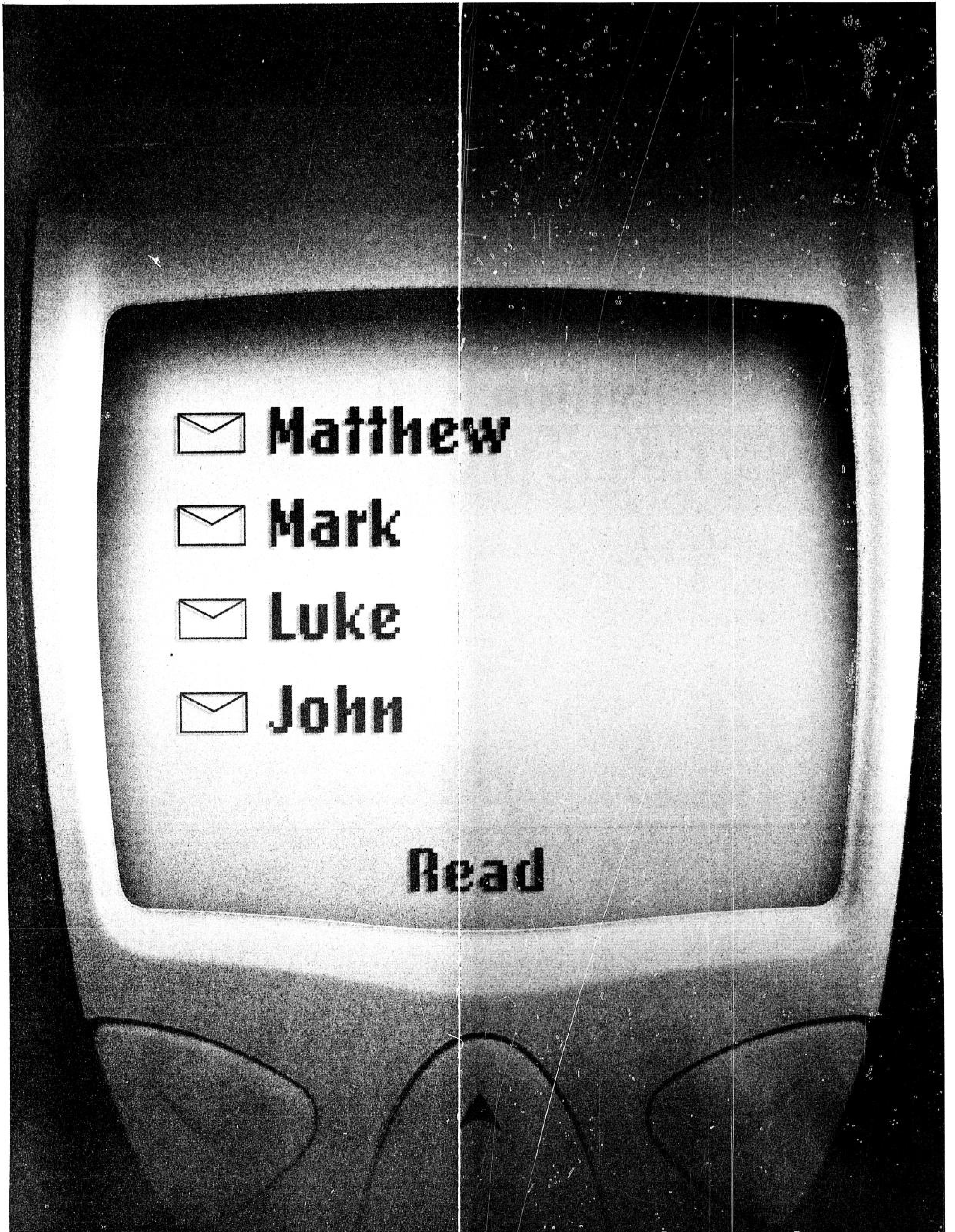
Lengthened to a full three kilometers, the circuit has undergone tremendous improvements in tandem with the continuing development of the Subic Freeport under chairman Felicito Payumo.

Sports Values Inc. (SVI) president Pocholo Ramirez said the new track layout will prove more challenging to the drivers and their cars with its uphill and downhill sections and sweeping high-speed corners.

"We expect the races to be more exciting than the previous years," said Ramirez, a multi-awarded race car driver himself who is credited for reviving circuit racing in the country in 1994.

"It (Subic International Raceway) is surely now one of the best in Southeast Asia," added Ramirez.

As host of international racing events for several years now, SIR continues this tradition by staging the first two rounds of the AFOS, considered as the premier motorsports event in Asia. For details, call the SVI at tel. 671-6926.


Matthew
Mark
Luke
John
Read

Some texts to read this Holy Week.

A Lenten message from

SMART

To get the Bible passage of the day, key in WORD and send to 211 on your SMART celfone.

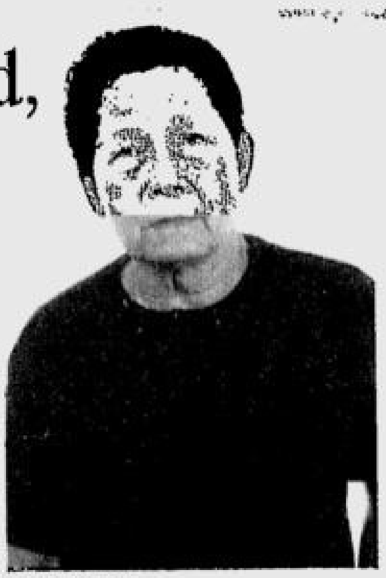
METRO

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

ON TARGET: Why many Catholics are leaving their church /A14

Adam, Herod, devil rolled into one

By Christian V. Esguerra



GRANADA

HE HAS bitten the forbidden apple, sold his master, burned babies, and been nailed to the cross.

Francisco "Paking" Granada at 72 is one of the oldest *sinakulistas* in Pasay City and in the country.

Mang Paking has been part of the *sinakulo* for more than half a century and has played almost all male roles in the Lenten play depicting biblical stories, from the Creation to the passion and death of Jesus Christ.

Granada has played Adam, Joseph the Carpenter, John the Baptist, King Herod, as well as the devil, making him an icon in the annual religious play among Pasay residents.

"This is my life and I'm proud to be part of this unique tradition," Granada told the INQUIRER in an interview last Monday.

This year marks the centennial of the *sinakulo* in Malibay in Pasay where the Granada clan has played a vital role in the yearly

ADAM/ A14

Poison in the air

By Carmela Reyes
PDI Central Luzon Desk
and Agnes E. Donato

SAN JOSE DEL MONTE CITY, Bulacan—Scavengers were foraging in the dump in Barangay Citrus here Wednesday afternoon when they noticed a "white and yellow powder" in the air.

By about 4 p.m. that day, at least 49 of the scavengers, including 16 children, had been taken to hospitals in Metro Manila after they inhaled fumes from chemicals that had been thrown in the dumpsite.

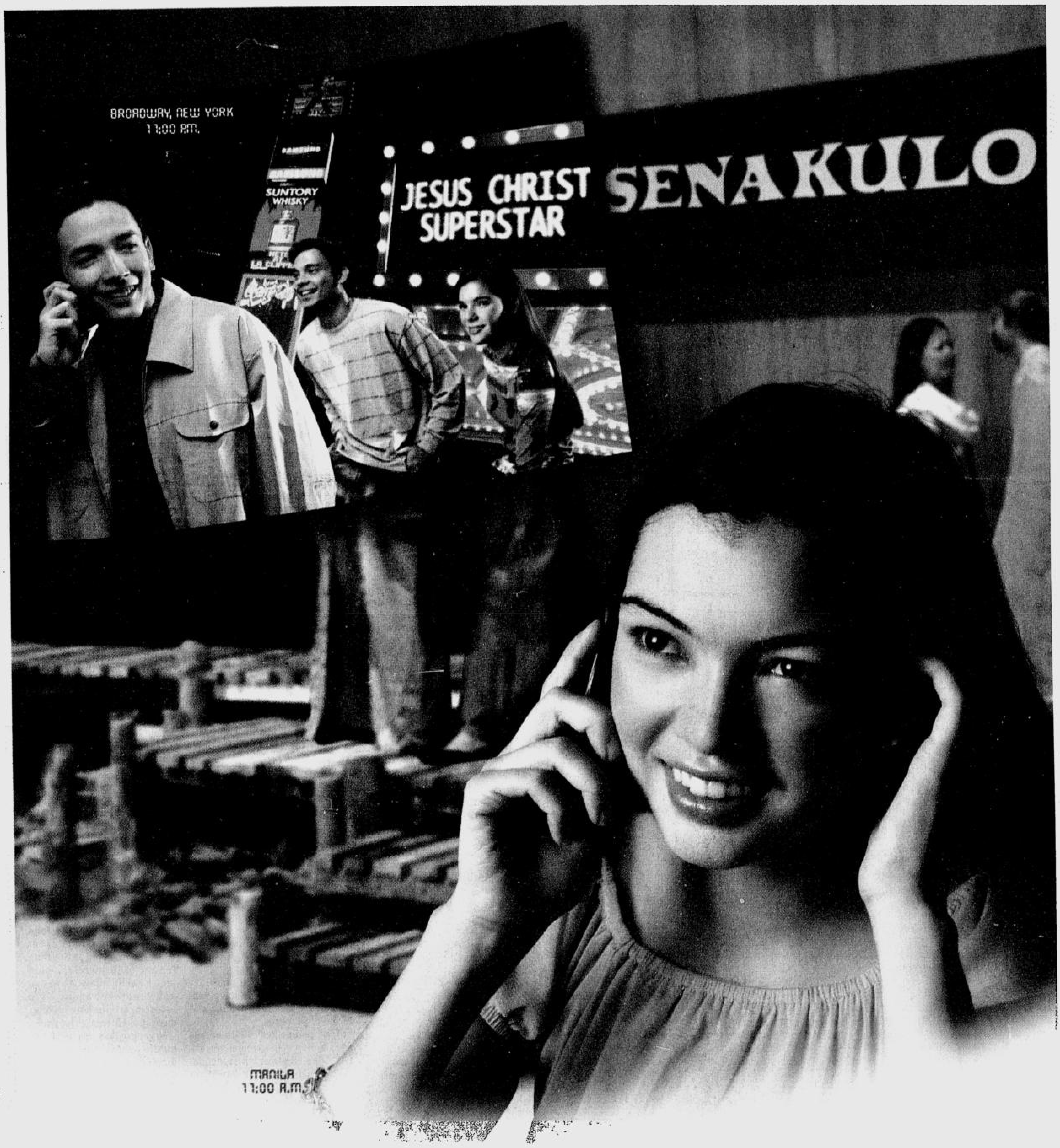
Jorge David, garbage collection and disposal supervisor of the city government, said the scavengers started complaining of muscle pains, headache and difficulty in breathing after they rummaged through the liquid and powder contents of at least 12 drums left in the dumpsite.

David said some scavengers felt nauseous and vomited, while the

POISON/A14

VAL HANDUMON

DEADLY fumes prompt residents to cover their noses.



This Holy Week, call your brother in the States and ask if God is still the lead character in his life.

It's so hard to maintain a spiritual life, especially in a fast-paced city like New York. So this Holy Week give him a ring with SMART IDD. Dial + • country code • area code • party's number and press send. Keep in touch. And hope that you and God can still play a role in his life.

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Heartbreak man takes SM woman hostage

By Alcuin Papa

POLICE yesterday morning shot and critically wounded in Makati a Quezon City man who went berserk and took a saleswoman hostage after his girlfriend left him.

Police identified the suspect as Dexter Salas, 23, of Sta. Ana, Manila. Salas sustained several gunshot wounds in the body.

According to police investigation, Salas was arrested by members of the Central Police District's Station 5 at about 3 a.m. after he turned violent, throwing rocks and breaking windows of the SM Department Store in Fairview, Quezon City.

Investigators learned that Salas could not accept the fact that his girlfriend had left him.

At the police station, Senior Insp. Eddie Arajil said he was questioning Salas, who was handcuffed and seated in front of his desk. Arajil said that when his attention was momentarily diverted, Salas managed to escape with his service firearm and part of his uniform.

Officers on duty tried to chase Salas without success.

Salas was able to commandeer a jeepney driven by Angelito Puerte, 32, while the driver was waiting for passengers in front of the Dona Carmen Public Market.

Salas took Puerte and Sherryl Torres, 22, a saleswoman of SM Fairview and a resident of Norzagaray, Bulacan, hostage at gunpoint. Torres was sitting beside the driver.

Salas ordered Puerte to bring them to Villamor Air Base in Pasay City but first they had to pass by Makati City to pick up a companion, investigators said.

At the corner of East Avenue and Edsa, Salas suddenly alighted and dragged Torres with him, police said. They boarded a taxicab and Salas ordered the driver to take them to Villamor.

Unknown to Salas, Puerte was following the taxi. At the corner of Pioneer Street and Edsa, Puerte was able to seek the assistance of SPO1 Benjamin Ariza. The police officer boarded Puerte's jeepney and they tailed the suspect.

The taxi turned right toward J. P. Rizal in Makati City and stopped at a traffic light. Ariza got down from the jeepney and approached the taxicab.

He said he identified himself as a police officer and tried to open the cab's door. But Salas pointed a gun at him, prompting him to shoot the suspect, investigators said.

Salas was taken to the Ospital ng Makati for treatment. Saleswoman Torres was not hurt.

Adam, Herod devil rolled into one

(From page A13)

presentation. Granada no longer plays bearded characters in robes. He has been a director for the past 10 years, giving way to younger and equally devoted talents.

As a child, Granada never missed a play featuring his Lolo Dionisio Geronimo, a member of the "Tres Caida" who introduced the sinakulo in Malibay in 1902. The two other founders were Juan Claudio, the first of only four Malibay natives to play Jesus Christ, and a certain Henyong Pilato.

"I was very fascinated with the play," Granada recalled. "It was my childhood dream to someday perform whatever role I could in the sinakulo."

The much awaited break came when he was 16. His old man needed someone to fill in for a minor character. He grabbed the opportunity and the rest is sinakulo history in Malibay.

Granada never found it hard to perform on stage in front of a crowd, most of whom were familiar to him. He never worried about forgetting his lines or committing any serious blunder. He had memorized the characters and their lines by heart from regularly watching the sinakulo.

From playing a nameless apostle in the Last Supper, he became John the Baptist and later King Herod, the character he loves most.

As the flamboyant king surrounded by drop-dead gorgeous sex slaves, he would taunt Jesus to perform a miracle to prove he indeed was the Messiah. Granada would recite in a mocking, stentorian voice: "Ang tungkod kong ito ay gawin mong ahas, katulad ni Moises sa tungkod niyang hawak. Bibilangan kita sa iyong pagtupad... isa... dalawa... tatlo..."

"How I love that role," he said. "It was very challenging. I had to make the audience feel the mockery and humiliation Christ suffered at the hands of the king."

By the time he was 23, Granada was already the hottest sinakulista in town, a dashing young man who made girls giggle with each stage performance.

Among the young women was Librada Jacinto, a pretty face from nearby Bangkal in Makati who visited Malibay to watch the sinakulo. Granada caught sight of her in one of his performances. He fell in love.

"From then on, my motivation was to impress her," he said. "I came to each performance all the more prepared, hoping she would like it."

Granada knew Librada would be the perfect match for a sinakulista like him. Coming from a family of musicians, she knew how to appreciate the play not only for its visual glamour but also for its lyrical quality. He married Librada in the same year they met.

It didn't take long for him and his wife to discover that their seven children were musically inclined. Not one of them would grow up to be a sinakulista, but for Granada it is enough that they are devoted to the play.

The children would later form a brass band that would provide accompaniment to their father's sinakulo.

Granada's 37-year-old son Edgar took a step further in his involvement in the passion play. He formed the Malibay Culture and Arts Foundation Inc. to revitalize the sinakulo and make Malibayeños, particularly the newcomers, realize "that they have a long history and a rich culture."

"They're forgetting our culture and sometimes their appreciation is lost," Edgar said.

The foundation is presenting until Saturday the 100th sinakulo, dubbed "Isang Siglong Pamana at Panata," at the refurbished Malibay Plaza.

Granada will surely be missed. His fans will no longer see him on stage. As director, he's now training the fourth generation of Malibayeños to continue the glorious tradition of the sinakulo.

He's teaching the young how to bite the forbidden apple, sell his master, burn babies, and get nailed to cross.

POISONED powder covers the garbage in the San Jose del Monte dump.

VAL HANDUMON

Poison in the air

(From page A13)

fingernails of others turned yellowish.

He said part of the dumpsite, including a village road and several trees, also turned yellowish after the drums were opened and their contents were scattered.

The victims were taken to the Sapang Palay District Hospital here but were later transferred to the East Avenue Medical Center and Lung Center in Quezon City.

East Avenue's Dr. Emmanuel Bueno said "the case (was) still under observation."

The dump is near the Sapang Palay cemetery here.

Police found 12 empty drums in the dump and recovered their plastic seals showing that the drums came from Rota Enterprises in Cubao, Quezon City.

Jovito Saguinsin, chief of the provincial environment and natural resources office, said the chemicals dumped here were expired chemicals used in dyeing garments.

David said they could not determine exactly how many drums were dumped in the area. But he said they found another 39 drums about 750 meters away from the dump.

David said Mayor Eduardo Roquero also ordered him not to allow children to touch or go near the drums.

David said the drums were left in the area about 6 p.m. on Monday. He said the driver of the van carrying the drums, identified as Noel Bidayo and a resident of Barangay Citrus, told the dumpsite guard that he would dump garbage hauled from Metro Manila.

The guard, Pedro Reyes, refused but Bidayo persisted and asked Reyes' friend, one Antonio Ceridad, to intervene. David said Ceridad eventually persuaded Reyes to allow the dumping.

David said Reyes told him he was not aware that the drums contained chemicals.

Police are still looking for Bidayo and Ceridad.

Why many Catholics are leaving their church

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

JAIME Cardinal Sin instructed all parishes and Catholic charitable institutions to set aside all collections from all Masses on Palm Sunday, March 24, to fund programs and services for the poor.

The good cardinal's instructions to his clergy and social welfare people to be charitable to the poor were long overdue. However, it's never too late to realize that charity begins at home—right in the doorsteps of Catholic churches where beggars gather to beg for alms from the more fortunate faithful.

It's a good thing Cardinal Sin has realized that the Church should attend to its poor, as well as to the poor belonging to other faiths.

***

It's high time the poor benefited from the blessings of one of the richest institutions in the country, the Catholic Church.

Dapat hindi lang kabig nang kabig: Magbigay din kayo!

***

Compared to the Protestant Iglesia ni Cristo, the Catholic Church in the Philippines, as well as its satellite groups like the El Shaddai, does not take care of its poor members.

The INC teaches its well-to-do members to share their blessings with the poor faithful. The money that INC members give to their church during services is spent on welfare, upkeep of church premises and the building of more churches. The funds are all accounted for.

On the other hand, the money that the Catholic faithful give to their church and the El Shaddai is not well accounted for.

***

This must be the reason Filipino Catholics give only "barya barya" to the church during services even when they can give much, much more.

The majority of Filipino Catholics who can afford to give to their church in proportion to their wealth don't do so because they don't see how their money is being spent.

They are generous in giving to charitable institutions outside the Catholic Church because they know their money will be spent where it is intended.

I hope the Catholic clergy in this country will come to realize that the reason many lay members are leaving the fold is that they don't feel that the Church is concerned about their welfare. They see that the Church is giving too much emphasis on local politics instead of saving souls.

***

Speaking of accounting of church funds, why don't the followers of Mike Velarde's El Shaddai ask him to tell them what he does with their contributions?

Up to now, after many years of holding rallies in open air, Velarde has not bought a place, like an auditorium, where his followers can listen to his sermons protected from sun and rain.

Mr. Velarde must have earned hundreds of millions of pesos in "love offerings" from his followers over the years. So, why can't he buy or build an auditorium?

***

If the so-called international peace mission really wants to know the real score in the "war in Basilan" then it should not only confine its interviews to captured Abu Sayyaf bandits.

It should also ask civilians, both Christian and Muslim, how their way of life has been adversely affected by the depredations of the bandit group.

Many of his countrymen agree with National Security Adviser Roilo Goilez who said that the mission is on a "fault-finding frenzy."

"They will see human rights violations in everything the military, both the Philippine and US, does but will see no evil in the ways of the Abu Sayyaf," Golez said.

***

Academic Walden Bello, a member of the peace mission, asked Philippine and US troops to "cooperate" by reporting their troop movements to the mission.

For an academic, Bello is witless for asking the Philippine and US military troops to divulge the areas where they're operating or are about to patrol. That would be exposing the boys to ambuscades by the Abu Sayyaf!

Bello sounds like he's an agent of the Abu Sayyaf.

***

Bello said the RP-US military operations in Basilan have "polarized the people in Basilan and in the Philippines."

If by "polarized" Bello means the Basilan war exercise has divided the Filipinos with an equal number of "pro" and "anti" on both sides of the spectrum, he hasn't been monitoring the public opinion polls.

An overwhelming majority of the citizenry favors the participation of US troops in the search-and-destroy operations against the Abu Sayyaf in Basilan.

***

Timoteo J. Rejano, an abusive agent of the National Bureau of Investigation, has been yanked out of the NBI's background investigation division and reassigned to a place "he does not like," according to NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco.

Wycoco took the move after reading about Rejano's very abusive act in this space. However, the NBI director would not want to reveal the place where Rejano was thrown into.

This is aside from the criminal and administrative cases that Rejano is facing in connection with his abusive act. Rejano detained and beat up a driver who accidentally bumped his wife. The poor guy was detained at the NBI jail for two days without charges being filed against him.

***

Wycoco said that he has also dismissed 45 abusive NBI confidential agents.

He has also dismissed John Herra, the notorious agent who was involved in stealing the car of former Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile a few years ago and another agent, Pio Valencia, for possible involvement in the illegal drug trade.

Wycoco has warned the public against dealing with dismissed NBI agent Martin Soriano who, he said, still claims to be connected with the bureau.

'Bomb' found on Makati sidewalk

By Alcuin Papa

POLICE found a pillbox on a sidewalk in Makati City yesterday morning following a phone call that said it could be a bomb.

SPO1 Edwin Quilala said the Makati City police Special Weapons and Tactics-Explosives and Ordnance Division (SWAT-EOD) received a phone call about 9:30 a.m. from an unidentified caller.

The caller said a suspected explosive device had been found near the Buendia Plaza Beer House in front of a Mercury Drugstore along Dian Street corner Gil Puyat Avenue.

Members of the bomb disposal group went to the site. But instead of a sophisticated explosive device, they found a crude pillbox encased in a steel can in a garbage can on the sidewalk.

Police investigators said they have yet to identify who left the device on the sidewalk. But they said members of rival fraternities might have produced the pillbox to use against their rival group.

At least eight bombs were found planted in different parts of Metro Manila, including Makati City, last week.

Three of the bombs were found in Makati City near the Prudential Bank building on Ayala Avenue, in front of the Comfoods building on Pasong Tamo and the Estrella Street overpass.

While the bombs were not meant to explode, the packages in which they came included a manifesto from a group calling itself the Indigenous People's Federal Army. The group is calling for a federal form of government.

Authorities said they have identified at least five groups as having the motive for planting the bombs. A military intelligence report identified the five groups as the People's Patriotic Movement, the Rebolusyonaryong Alyansang Makabansa, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, the Moro National Liberation Front and the Indigenous Peoples' Federal Army.

Some intelligence sources have suggested that the IPFA is a mere MILF front. Some of IPFA members are said to have links with the MILF.

The MILF has said that the group was a real organization and even described it as a "legitimate revolutionary" group.

Police arrested on Tuesday in Payatas, Quezon City a man whom they said was suspected of having planted the bombs.

Reports have said police believed that Eleno Umpar, 20, has links to a faction loyal to former ARMM governor and former Moro National Liberation Front head Nur Misuari.

Also recovered from Umpar was a .38 caliber pistol, police said.

S&R Price shopping hours

IT'S business as usual at S& R Price Membership Shopping at Bonifacio Global City, on Ortigas Extension in Pasig City and on Congressional Avenue in Quezon City during the Holy Week except tomorrow, Good Friday, when operations are suspended.

Regular hours (8 a.m. to 9 p.m.) will be observed on March 30. All three branches will close earlier (6 p.m.) today.

After Good Friday, S& R Price reopens on Black Saturday. For more information, call 888-0433.

Finding a piece of peace this Holy Week

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

MAUNDY Thursday is no time to thirst for the latest show biz scoops so just for now allow me to veer away from the usual topic of my column. In lieu of intrigues today, I will let you in on the weekend retreat I had with some colleagues in the biz and new-found friends.

I went with *Tita* **Chit Guerrero** (AVP special projects ABS-CBN), actress **Amy Austria**, scriptwriter non-pareil **Raquel Villavicencio** (whose works include "Init sa Magdamag," "Hihintayin Kita sa Langit," "Ikaw Pa Lang ang Minahal" to name a few), **Pinky De Leon**, **Fanny Serrano** to join **Orpah Marasigan** (of Artists in Touch), **Emlyn Olfindo**, **Hans** and **Dang Pe** (of Campus Crusade for Christ) in the cozy home of *Ate* **Laura** (Orpah's sis) nestled in the slopes of Mount Makiling.

The view from the lawn was more than just postcard-pretty. We all belong to different Born Again Christian churches, but we were brought together by our common yearning for some quiet that we could get by spending uninterrupted time with the Lord.

Up to the last moment of planning, we thought our schedules would not clear up. But since we all wanted it badly enough to happen, it did.

That is not to say that the Lord must set an appointment with us. Disappoinments are more what we are to Him whether we realize it or not. Everyday we should try to really set aside quality time for Him.

Tita Chit fetched Fanny, Kelly (Raquel V.) and I last Friday at around 8 p.m. (Thanks *Tita* Chit for inviting me. It was one of the rare moments when I was at the right place at the right time with the right company!)

Personal savior

En route to Los Baños, we updated each other on some juicy off-the-record stories. The show biz frenzy soon subsided and we began talking about other colleagues in the biz who have accepted Jesus as their "personal savior" just like us but are in need of some "booster shots" so to speak.

It's indeed a wonderful feeling to know that amid all the craziness in the biz, we somehow look out for each other.

Upon arriving at Makiling Heights, Amy (or as we fondly call her "Duchess" because her husband's name is Duke) served us her yummy pasta, while ever-dependable AIT organizers Orpah and Emlyn briefed us about the retreat procedures and the jolly caretaker *Mang* **Lando** made us all feel at home.

We were all teasing each other to pig out that night because we were going to fast the next day. It's not that I'm downplaying the significance of fasting. It really makes a big difference when you do it wholeheartedly (as opposed to mere diet fads) as you pray fervently.

Kelly and I had an intense heart-to-heart talk under the moonlight. The writers in us could not help being carried away by the tranquil setting. There we were swapping stories like we were long-lost high school friends. Thanks for the instant bonding, Kelly!

Among all of Kelly's quotable one-liners, the one that will stand out in my memory is this: "Now that my three daughters are all grown-up, I find myself not needing to be half of any relationship especially a romantic one. I think I've outgrown the emotional circus. The scripts I write are enough drama for me already."

We all woke up rather early last Saturday morning. Emlyn was so fired up leading the praise and worship service. Sometimes music can touch where words can't reach especially when you're so engrossed in prayer.

Unthinkable

Orpah then told us to all look for a spot of our choice so we could begin our own silent retreat with the Lord. From 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., we were not supposed to speak to anyone.

For show biz folks like us, keeping our mouths shut even just for 10 minutes is quite unthinkable but we managed to do so.

As Amy puts it, "I thought I would not last but when you really meditate on God's word you won't get bored and before you realize it, the day has passed."

We all agreed to what she said. Fanny echoed, "I also tried to stop sending text messages to my friends, but when the Spirit would lead me to a particular scripture it's as if God wants me to share it with a friend so I open my cell and send the message to a certain friend. But I also close it right after so I can get back to my quiet time with God."

Later during the day, Pinky joined us. She cut short her taping so as to be able to be part of the retreat. She was a source of much laughter and insight all throughout the retreat as she openly shared her views about other religious sects she has tried before.

Pastor **Nomer (Bernardino)** and his wife Sister **Sylvia** (Bread from Heaven) came before sunset.

Pastor's preaching about "prayer" really hit me bullseye in my heart. To quote some of Pastor's words, "Prayer is a coming home to the Father. We should always feel welcome to return to Him no matter how far away we've gone from Him.

Polite

"And we should not think that prayer must always be polite. Like we are censoring our thoughts. We must feel free to say what we really feel even it does not sound so good.

"Prayer is also a filter. Before we face our enemies or loved ones, we should cry our heart out to the Lord and address our complaints to Him. God can take it! Others cannot. And that's the cause of many problems in relationships when we try to blame and say hurting words to each other without bringing our concerns to God first."

After a hearty dinner (fasting then feasting!), we all converged in the sala and seriously planned to put up a group we intend to call "Artists for Jesus."

As Fanny laments, "The trouble is some people judge a religious group by its members. Saying that group is only for musicians or meant for actors only, etc. What matters is the common goal. There are so many stars who have already attended Born Again services. The seed has been planted but it just needs follow-up. So it would be great if we can all unite and be one for Christ regardless of what church you're from."

Personally, the way I see it is that we are all just on different boats, but if we follow the same map (The Bible) we are all headed to the same direction.

Others may sail faster or slower than we do but what counts is that we all keep rowing with all our might. When storms come, we can be assured of the fact that Jesus is our only anchor and lifesaver!

Baptism

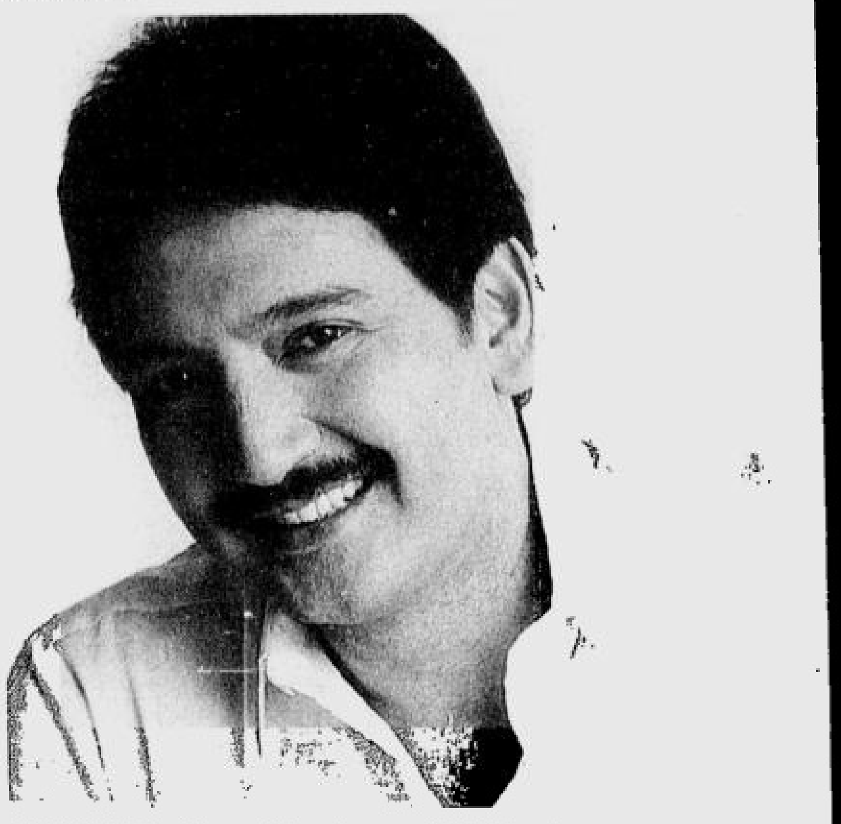
The highlight of our retreat was the "baptism" of *Tita* Chit and Amy. Their husbands surprised them and showed up that beautiful Sunday morning. It's an indescribable feeling to witness "sisters" being completely forgiven for all their sins and cleansed thoroughly by the blood of Jesus.

I got a chance to have a long and engaging talk with Amy about affairs of the heart and how God brought Duke into her life. It's no secret that Amy has had checkerboard romances (which Pinky and I could relate to. Shhh! Secret, sisters! Ha, ha, ha!). I was deeply moved by her story. It made me look inward to check what state my hyperactive heart is in. And I must say that even when men promise to love you for better or for worse, it's only Jesus who will love you for good.

Even now as sit in front of my computer, all I have to do is sit still, close my eyes, get lost in my thoughts and find my way back to where God lumped us all together one rainy weekend. Then we can recapture the inner joy and peace that are the missing pieces in our harried lives.

May you all find not just a piece of peace this Holy Week. Repent and repaint your lives in harmony with God's master plan!

For feedback, e-mail luvludg@hotmail.com, friends_at_dsquare@yahoo.com, wateringhole2000@yahoo.com



FERNANDEZ. He would rather count his blessings

Rudy F, golden boy

By Remy M. Umerez

IF it were not for a big party that marked his birthday, and if he himself had not admitted his true age, no one would suspect that action star Rudy Fernandez is now a golden boy.

The bash was meant as a surprise for Rudy, who normally spent his birthdays by dining out with his family. But his wife Lorna Tolentino believes that turning half a century old is a cause for celebration and joy. She gathered all of his friends and others who have touched their lives to share the event with them.

Our conversation with the action star started at Banda Forrest, a joint near the Manila Bay where live bands perform. Just a few steps away is Pantalan, another bayside restaurant where Rudy later decided to treat us to dinner.

It was at Banda Forrest where a "shootout" would break out, during a performance by Viktoria who is appearing as a guest in the movie "Diskarte."

"Diskarte" is Rudy's first film after he devoted a year and a half to his political bid, which failed. He was last seen in "The Ping Lacson Story," based on the exploits of the senator who is former chief of the Philippine National Police.

Rudy plays an ex-marine officer who gets double-crossed by corrupt lawmen. It is a kind of role that he must have played a hundred times and that he could probably do even with his eyes closed.

So where lies the challenge this time?

"Our director Roy Vinarao always settles for a different treatment of the issues involved," Rudy said. "It is like cooking. We add new ingredients to make it seem like a new dish. The pacing is extremely fast, non-stop action if possible. Even the drama portion is shortened.

Theater people

"We also get the services of some stage performers. For instance, this is the first time I am working with Menggie Cobarrubias. Other products of the stage include Jonee Gamboa, John Arcilla and Roy Alvarez who is the chief villain in the story. We don't want moviegoers to say that all they see in my movies are the same familiar faces."

"Diskarte" marks the second team-up of Rudy and Ara Mina. Their first starrer, "Palaban," made good at the box-office.

Tirso Cruz III is also in the cast of the film which is Maverick's official entry to the Manila Film Festival this June.

Ara plays Rudy's dancer girlfriend. They have several love scenes, including three "major scenes," according to the movie's publicist.

Sex, according to Rudy, is one of the reasons why he looks younger than his age. Sex with his wife only, of course, he added.

Rudy hopes movie producers would combine top action stars in the same movie. "It seemed so easy then to put Ace Vergel and I in a movie," he said. "New casting concepts will certainly bring excitement back to the local movie industry. I understand that Sharon (Cuneta) and Judy Ann (Santos) are playing sisters in a Viva movie and that's great."

Fitness

He pleaded for all the people in the movie industry to unite in order to solve the problem of piracy that is slowly killing the movie and recording business. The press, he stressed, should always remind readers that pirated copies are very poor in quality and eventually will destroy their CD players. They are losers in the end."

We asked Rudy what makes him look forever young. Does he take different kinds of vitamins like Eddie Garcia does?

"Only Vitamin E," he said, "and lots and lots of fruit juices," especially coconut water because it cleanses the system.

Once a week, he goes to a spa in New Manila in Quezon City for weights and massage. He continues his exercises at home where he has a private gym.

He sleeps at least eight hours a day.

In "Diskarte," Rudy sports a tattoo on one arm and on his wrists and back. But these are only for the movie, he stressed, adding that even if it is fashionable nowadays among both men and women, he would never wear permanent tattoos.

His birthday wish?

Rudy would rather count his blessings.

He's not even dreaming of victory in the 2004 elections?

"I hope that the term of local government officials is longer," he said. "You spend so much time campaigning and by the time you get seated when you win, you have to start preparing for the next election. Your concentration is divided."

CELEBRITY participants in the volleyball games include (from left) Monsour del Rosario, Reggie Curley, Isabel Granada, Ana Larrucea, Andrea del Rosario, Cheri Lou, Toffee Calma, Alessandra de Rossi, Binibining Pilipinas-Universe Zorayda Andam, Michelle Reyes and Onemig Bondoc.

NESTLÉ Philippines executive vice president Yves Manghardt chats with Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr.

Show biz stars, athletes, politicians grace Nestea beach volleyball opening

THE HEAT was on at the sand courts of La Salle Greenhills last March 9 and 10, where the first serving of the 6th Nestea Beach Volley University Championships made a huge splash as the first batch of Metro Manila teams faced each other in two-day preliminary matches.

A total of 32 men's teams and 24 women's teams are representing Metro Manila-based schools and they are all competing for the chance to fly to Boracay in May and join the finals. At stake is over half-a-million pesos in prizes, including the grand prize of P100,000 and P50,000 worth of sports equipment for the school they represent.

Not just athletes and celebrities were there to kick the opening ceremonies into high gear, but also government officials who threw behind all their support for this popular sport.

The piercing summer heat didn't discourage the presence of guest speakers Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., DILG Secretary Joey Lina, La Salle Greenhills president Bro. Bernie Oca, Viva Vintage Sports chief operating officer Ronnie Nathanielsz, chair of J. Romero events Andre Kahn and Nestlé Philippines executive vice president Yves Manghardt.

Adding spice to the opening ceremonies were a dozen celebrities who formed two teams as they showed off their athletic skills.

Comprising the blue team were Monsour del Rosario, "Atta Girl" star Reggie Curley and Andrea del Rosario, reigning Binibining Pilipinas-Universe Zorayda Andam, ABS-CBN talent Anna Larucea and Nestea beach volley staple Isabel Granada, who also represented her school PATTS for the tournament.

Offering challenge from the white team were "Atta Girl" mainstay Onemig Bondoc, model Toffee Calma, Miss Tourism World Michelle Reyes, "MTB" and "Pangako sa 'Yo" star Cherie Lou, 2001 Metro Manila Filmfest best supporting actress Alessandra de Rossi and Magic 89.9 DJ Little Joey.

The 6th Nestea Beach Volley University Championships have been endorsed by the Philippine Sports Commission and co-organized with Club Volle.

On April 5-7, more spikers from Metro Manila will face each other still at the sand courts of La Salle Greenhills.

Luzon and VisMin student athletes will also show their mettle on April 13-15 in the same venue.

Supporting the 6th Nestea Beach Volley University Championships are sponsors like Speedo, the official outfitter; Astring-O-Sol Ice; Asian Spirit, the People's Airline; Mikasa; WG&A Superferry; Kenny Rogers Roasters; and Boracay resorts Villa de Oro and Boracay Gold Crowne Club.

Visit the Nestea website at www.nestea.ph.

Lenten beach parties in Boracay island

NATURAL Born Klubbers holds its popular Easter beach party, "Mano Mission 2002" in Boracay, March 27 to 30.

The event gathers the young, hip and influential trend-setters from Manila and other urban centers.

"Mano Mission 2002" is a massive annual dance and chill-out events organized by Philippine clubbing and events. Featured are popular NBK resident DJs led by Manolet Dario.

The parties start at 4 p.m.

Where Else in Boracay

WHERE Else club diversifies itself by treating Boracay to a series of parties this Holy Week.

Catch the New York sound as Dee-Lite Supa DJ Dimitry flies to the island for a kick-ass dance party at Beachcomber Bar.

Dimitry is best known as part of the trio Dee-Lite, which took dance music to a new plateau and churned out hits like "Groove is in the Heart," in the early '90s.

Also tonight, troop to Club Bazzura for a foam party with DJs Elmer Dado, Edge, James McCranie and Mon Marama.

Tomorrow, Good Friday, Where Else hosts a "Black Out Party" at Bazzura.

On Saturday, unwind at a sunset chill-out session with DJs Mon Maramba and Edge at Beachcomber.

Home . . .

From page A18

ties, and the tenacity that marks those of their parents, more pronounced. Acknowledging the disparity is what initiates the mending process.

A quick show of hands may bring home the point: How many of us have gone back to the ancestral home to weather storms as adults, and have found ourselves assaulted by memories at every turn, and by every scent and sensation?

The Royal Tenenbaums are fueled by some kind of malaise that reminds one, fondly, of the Gomez-Morticia Addams household, a worthy aspiration for families with dark secrets—and is there any one in the world that doesn't?

Sly and quirky

Anderson co-wrote the script with Owen Wilson (they were English major roommates at the University of Texas), considered today as "one of the most original young writers in Hollywood." They first teamed up for the script of "Bottle Rocket," a sharp-as-a-tack crime comedy, and then again for "Rushmore," a critically acclaimed indie film (1998).

Wilson also wrote some of the funniest lines in the more recent "Shanghai Noon," where he starred as Jackie Chan's cowboy sidekick.

As much as Owen Wilson the Actor is known for his twisted nose, critics say that the trademarks of Owen Wilson the Screenwriter are "a sly sense of humor and a knack for writing quirky dialogue."

Moviegoers who live precisely for such quirky smarts will be immensely gratified by "The Royal Tenenbaums." As will everyone who is able to find personal validation and compassion, even hilarity, in the apparent fact that every family closet is entitled to one or two skeletons.

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ila) tel 734.7724

AKE CHARMER

Mandaluyong
533.3851 / 533.3856

1 THE MAJESTIC
2 BANDITS
WE WERE SOLDIERS

Prima
(Pasig) tel 641.1215

3

tann Cinerama Complex Recto SUPER CINERAMA
tel 733.4238

BANDITS
(DOLBY) MAJESTIC
3 SNAKE CHARMER
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE

New Divisoria Mall DIVISORIA CINEMA
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1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5 RESERVE
6 RESERVE

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Talaba Bacoor Cavite

1 OPENS MARCH 30
2 OPENS MARCH 30

Berma
tel 879.2029

1 BANDITS
2 ACCIDENTAL SPY

CitiMall
(Parañaque) tel 820.7269

1 RESERVE
2 RESERVE

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
tel (0 2185 / 534.2198

1 E SOLDIERS
2 BIBINGKA
3 (DTS) INGS

Cine ermart
tel (04 , 545.7383

1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DTS) LORD OF THE RINGS
3 (DOL SOLDIERS
4 Y NEUTRON

C. 20 Pavilion Mall
tel (049) 411.1146

1 GOT 2 BELIEVE
2 (DOLBY) WERE SOLDIERS
ANGAN KO'Y IKAW
LORD OF THE RINGS

2000 Cinemagix
(U eta) tel(075) 568.6771

1 WE WERE SOLDIERS
13 GHOSTS
SOON TO OPEN
SOON TO OPEN

Cinema 2000 MetroTown
(Tarlac) tel(045) 982.1729

GOT 2 BELIEVE
RAT RACE
13 GHOSTS
(DOLBY) (DTS) BEAUTIFUL MIND

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

1 (SDDS) RESERVE
2 BIBINGKA
3 MASARAP HABANG MAINIT
4 (DTS) BANDITS

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

1 (DOLBY) WE WERE SOLDIERS
2 EVA
3 (DTS) JIMMY NEUTRON
4 BIBINGKA
5 MILLION DOLLAR MANSION

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883

1 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
2 WE WERE SOLDIERS
3 BIBINGKA

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249-2558

1 THE OTHERS
2 JIMMY NEUTRON
3 BIBINGKA

Olivarez Tagaytay
tel (046) 413.0311

1 LORD OF THE RINGS
2 GOT 2 BELIEVE
3 ESKANDALOSA

Morales Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.9736

1 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
2 THE BODY
3 RESERVE

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel (049) 531.4808

1 (DTS) RESERVE
2 (DTS) EVA

Fourstep
(Cavite) tel (046) 416.2385

1 RESERVE

Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

1 EVA
2 LORD OF THE RINGS
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

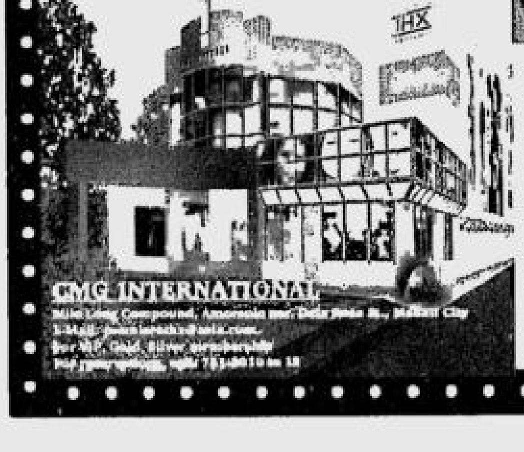
1 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2 BIBINGKA
3 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
4 MARSHALL DICK

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

1 (DOLBY EX) QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
2 NOT ANOTHER TEEN MOVIE
3 (DTS) D-TOX
4 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES

***Movies are subject to change without prior notice**

ADVANCED SCREENING THX DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS



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4 JIMMY NEUTRON
5 JOHN Q
6 BANDITS
7 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8 ICE AGE
9 WE WERE SOLDIERS
10 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Ermita
536 -7809- 12

1 ICE AGE
2 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
3 JIMMY NEUTRON
4 GOOD ADVICE
5 WE WERE SOLDIERS
6 JOHN Q
7 BANDITS

Metro East -
Marcos Hway 682- 8193 / 8280

1 JOHN Q
2 BANDITS
3 ICE AGE
4 JIMMY NEUTRON
5 ICE AGE
6 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
7 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
8 GOT 2 BELIEVE

Novaliches
935- 3229 - 30

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2 ICE AGE
3 GOT 2 BELIEVE
4 JOHN Q
5 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
6 JIMMY NEUTRON
7 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
8 WE WERE SOLDIERS

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3 BANDITS
4 ICE AGE
5 JIMMY NEUTRON
6 QUEEN OF THE DAMNED

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1 13 GHOSTS
2 SHALLOW HAL
3 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4 A BEAUTIFUL MIND
5 ESKANDALOSA
6 GOT 2 BELIEVE

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1 D-TOX
2 JIMMY NEUTRON
3 BATAS NG LANSANGAN
4 MOTHMAN PROPHECIES
5 13 GHOSTS
6 A BEATIFUL MIND

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Sn Fernando, Pamp. 875- 1927
961-5318 / 5270

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3 EVA
4 D-TOX
5 JIMMY NEUTRON
6 JIMMY NEUTRON

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Wesley Snipes returns to play the lead in 'Blade' sequel

THE ORIGINAL "Blade" was a demonstration of frenzied visual effects, a technological vampire bloodbath with no meaning or direction.

Although the sequel is very physical, emphasizing battle sequences and special effects over story and characters, "Blade II" knows where the first film went awry and does not repeat those mistakes. Instead of creating a dizzying collage of delinquent action sequences, the new film focuses on excitement.

Exploding from the pages of Marvel Comic Books, Blade, born half-man, half vampire after a bloodsucker attacked his pregnant mother, vowed to protect humanity from the dark, secret world of evil vampires. Armed with an arsenal of lead and garlic, Blade continues to fight the never-ending war between the living and the undead.

This time around, Blade isn't killing vampires. There's a new breed of terror lurking under city sewers and in the night's dark shadows. Vampires who once trained to kill Blade now require his assistance to rid the world of this new breed of terror.

Wesley Snipes returns with an amazing physical presence to play the lead in "Blade II," directed by award-winning megman Guillermo del Toro.

Del Toro, a Spanish horror maestro and lover of myths, creates a true sense of excitement within all the violence and gore. He does not open a freak show like Stephen Norrington did with the original "Blade." Instead, Del Toro grips the audience by the neck and pulls them into the center of the energy.

WESLEY Snipes with first-time leading lady Leonor Varela in "Blade II."

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101	
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	JOHN Q
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	HARI NG SELDA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (DDS)	BLADE 2
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	TIME MACHINE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	ICE AGE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	QUEEN OF THE DAMNE
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	BANDITS
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	HARI NG SELDA
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	BLADE 2
FIESTA CARNIVAL	
NEW FRONTIER	
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	HUBOG / TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	JOHN Q
ODEON-2	BANDITS
ROBEN	SNAKE CHARMER
TANDEM-1	SEX MEDUSA
TANDEM-2	SEX EDUCATION
TIMES	OTHER SIDE OF LOVE / AMERICAN PIE 2
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	ORIGINAL SIN
QUEZON-1	BIBINGKA
REMAR	SNAKE CHARMER
REMAR-2	BIBINGKA
NOVA MALL - NOVALICHES CINEMA	
A	BIBINGKA
B	EVA LASON KAY ADAN
C	
MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79 / 633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	THE MAJESTIC
CINEMA-2	BANDITS
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-5401 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	BATAS NG LANSANGAN
CINEMA-2	ACHILLES
CINEMA-3	BIBINGKA
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	WE WERE SOLDIERS
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	D-TOX
CINEMA-6	MASARAP HABANG MAINIT
CINEMA-7	EVA
CINEMA-8	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MAJESTIC
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	BANDITS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	JOHN Q
CINEMA-12	JIMMY NEUTRON
CINEMA-14	QUEEN OF THE DAMNED
CINEMA-15	GOT 2 BELIEVE
LORES	
CINEMA-2	CLOSED
CINEMA-3	CLOSED
POWER PLANT CINEMA	
CINEMA-1	BANDITS
CINEMA-2	JIMMY NEUTRON
CINEMA-3	A BEAUTIFUL MIND
CINEMA-4	THE MAJESTIC
CINEMA-5	GOOD ADVICE
CINEMA-6	JOHN Q
UNIWIDE METROMALL	
(LAS PINAS)	
CINEMA-1	
CINEMA-2	
CINEMA-4	
UNIWIDE COASTAL MALL	
(PARANAQUE)	
CINEMA-1	ALIPIN NG TUKSO
CINEMA-2	THE OTHER SIDE OF LOVE
CINEMA-4	ALAMID

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41

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CLOSED TODAY	CLOSED TODAY	CLOSED TODAY

Matinee, P80, Mon.-Fri.,11:00 am to 4:45 pm Screenings, Free Seating.

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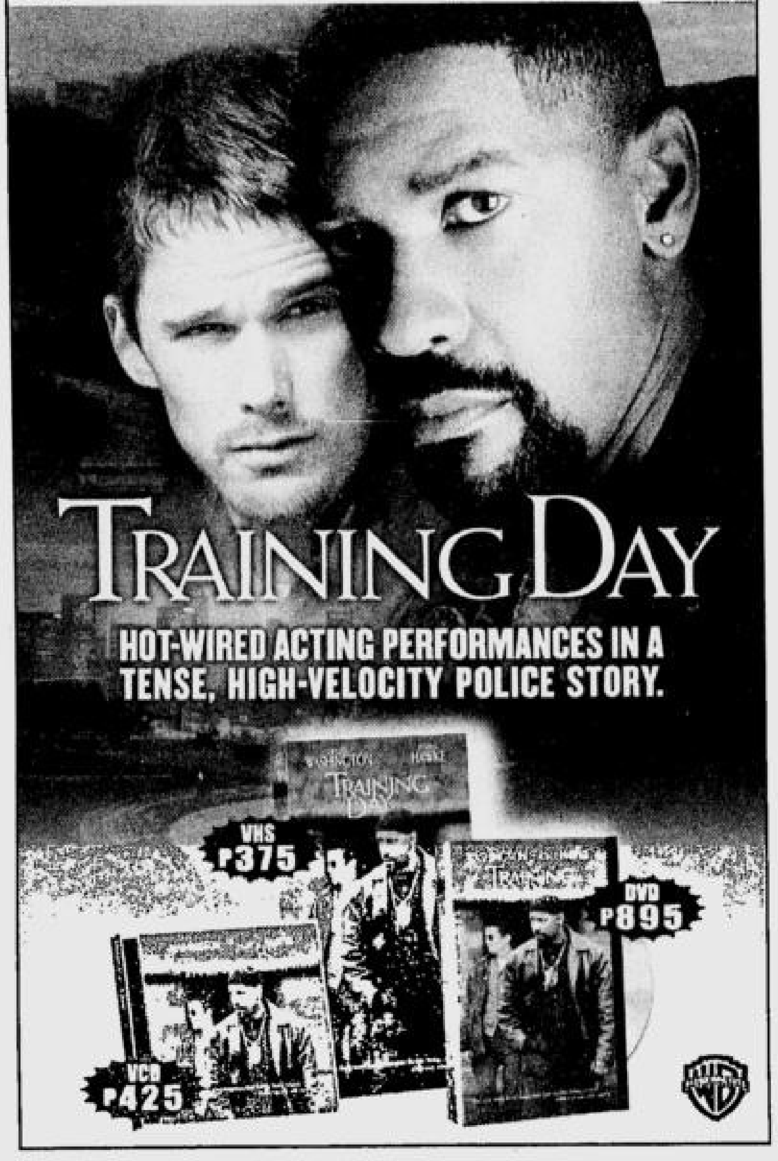
Ethan Hawke - Best Supporting Actor Nominee



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VCD P425

OPENS MARCH 30
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CINEMAS

MTRCB Rating: Restricted 18 (R)

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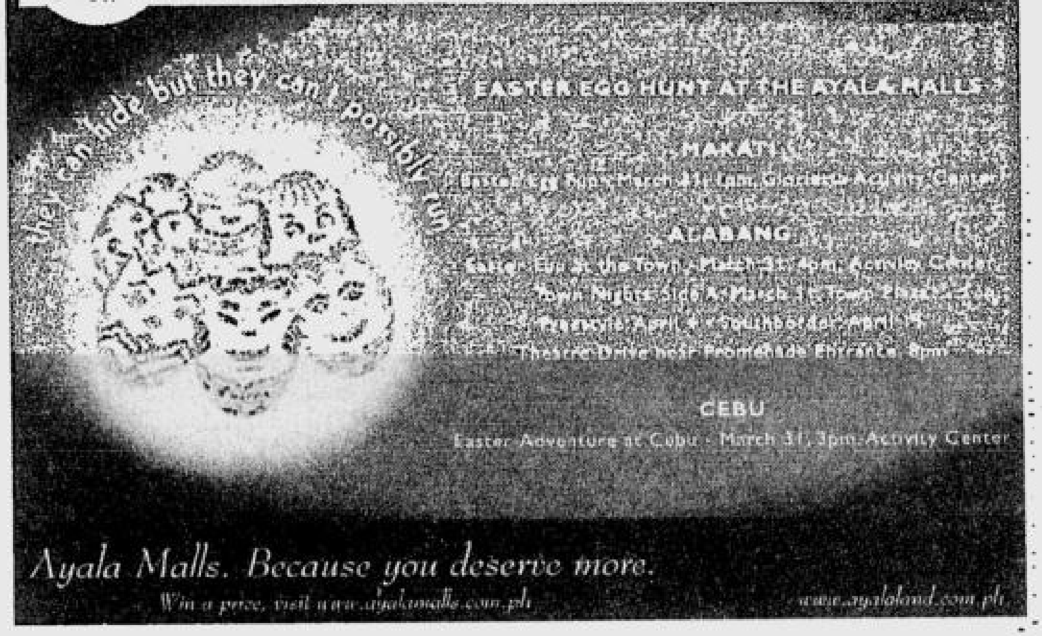
G1 (GLORIETTA 1)	G4 (GLORIETTA 4)		GB1 (GREENBELT 1)	ATC (ALABANG TOWN CENTER)
1 CLOSED TODAY	1 CLOSED TODAY	4 CLOSED TODAY	1 CLOSED TODAY	1 CLOSED TODAY
2 CLOSED TODAY	2 CLOSED TODAY	5 CLOSED TODAY	2 CLOSED TODAY	2 CLOSED TODAY
3 CLOSED TODAY	3 CLOSED TODAY GUARANTEED SEATS	6 CLOSED TODAY	3 CLOSED TODAY	3 CLOSED TODAY
4 CLOSED TODAY		7 CLOSED TODAY	4 CLOSED TODAY	4 CLOSED TODAY
				5 CLOSED TODAY

THIS WEEK'S EVENTS

MAKATI ALABANG CEBU


they can hide but they can't possibly run

EASTER EGG HUNT AT THE AYALA MALLS

MAKATI
Easter Egg Hunt: March 31, 1pm, Glorietta Activity Center

ALABANG
Easter Fun at the Town - March 31, 4pm, Activity Center
Town Nights: Side A: March 31, Town Plaza [illegible]
Freestyle: April 4 • Southborder: April 11
Theatre Drive near Promenade Entrance, 8pm

CEBU
Easter Adventure at Cebu - March 31, 3pm, Activity Center

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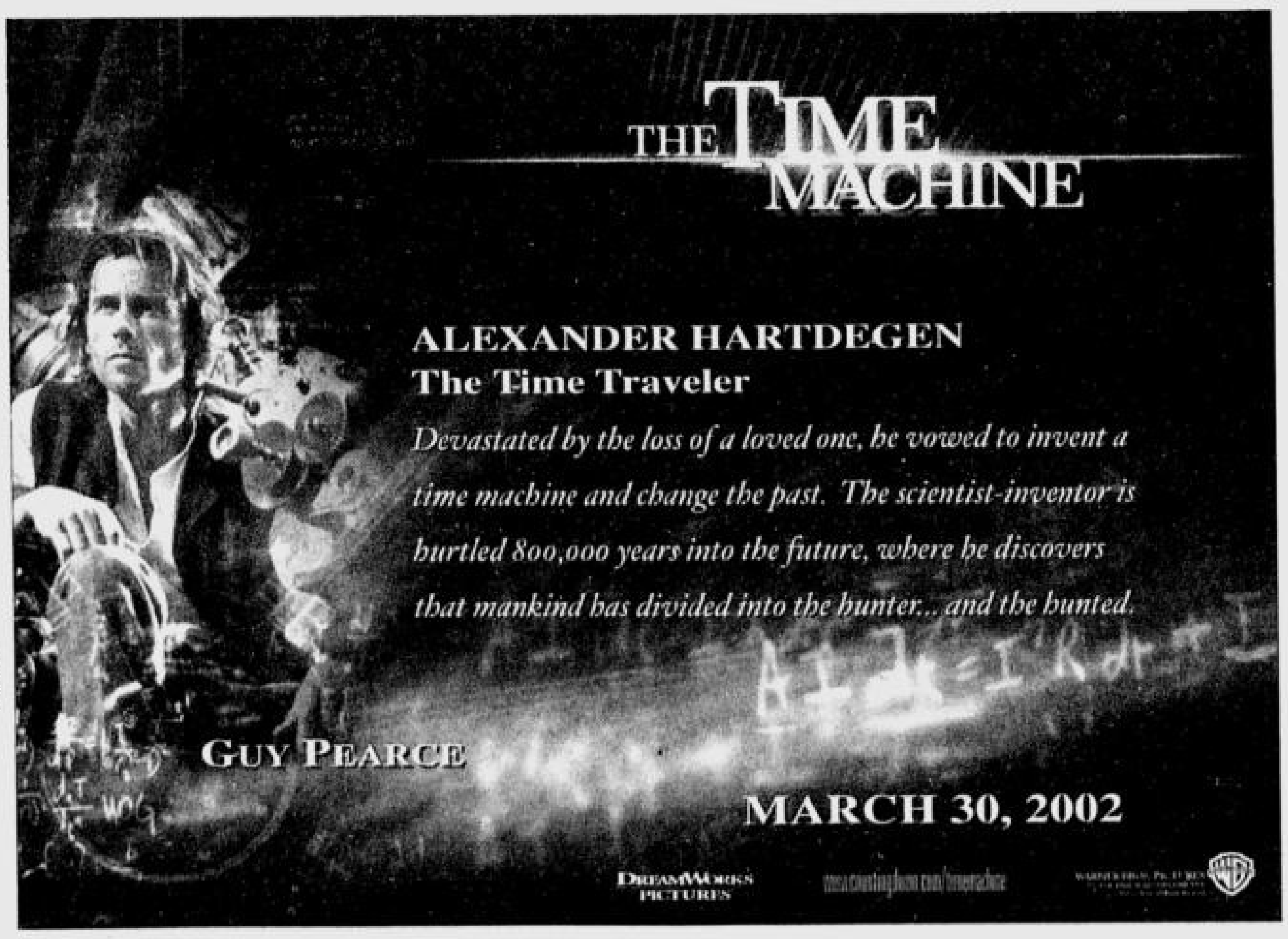


THE TIME MACHINE

ALEXANDER HARTDEGEN
The Time Traveler

Devastated by the loss of a loved one, he vowed to invent a time machine and change the past. The scientist-inventor is hurtled 800,000 years into the future, where he discovers that mankind has divided into the hunter... and the hunted.

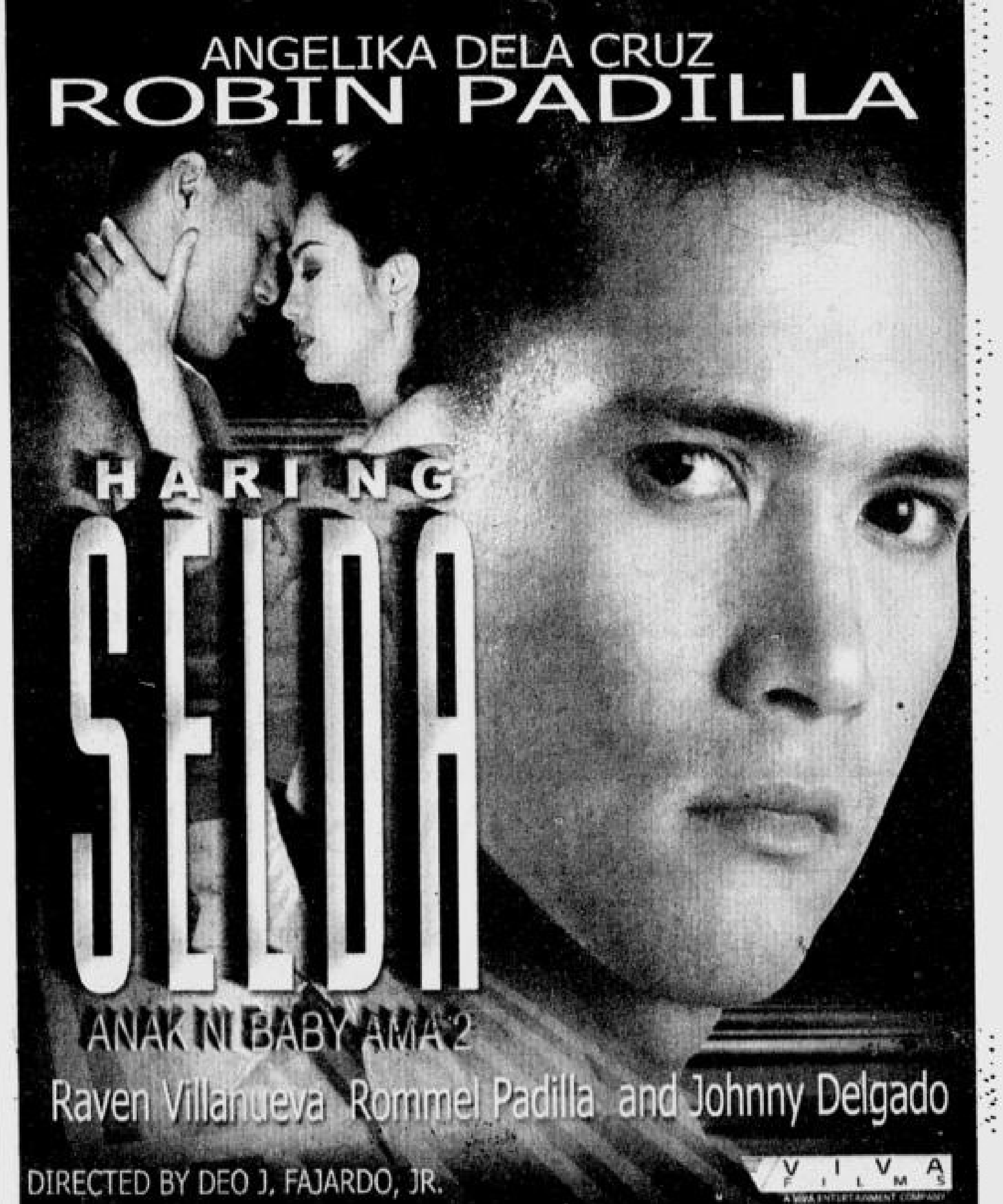
GUY PEARCE

MARCH 30, 2002

DREAMWORKS PICTURES

3-TAON NABILIBID
NGAYON, MAY KWENTONG IHAHATID!

ANGELIKA DELA CRUZ
ROBIN PADILLA



ANAK NI BABY AMA 2

Raven Villanueva Rommel Padilla and Johnny Delgado

DIRECTED BY DEO J. FAJARDO, JR.

VIVA FILMS

'PRE PERSONALAN NA 'TO!
OPENS MARCH 30 NATIONWIDE

ENTERTAINMENT

Editor **Louie C. Camino**

MINIMALIST performances from the all-star cast of "The Royal Tenenbaums."

'THE ROYAL TENENBAUMS'

Home are the kooks

By Emmie G. Velarde

REVIEW

EVERY cookie jar is entitled to one at least one kook. The jar that is Royal Tenenbaum's family has seven: his wife and himself, their three children, his manservant, and a kid from across the street whose all-encompassing desire is to belong to the brood.

Each one is a borderline nutcase. Royal, a washed-out litigator, is perpetually callous and intermittently manic. The rest swing from depression to melancholy and back—not too wide a swing but always potentially tragic and, at strategic points, comic.

For some, this may not be much of a premise to build a whole movie on, but it certainly is to people who can't stop wondering why they were born into the family they have grown up in. We can safely place their number at a few hundred million.

Black sheep and problem children have grown out of style in contemporary discussions of family dynamics. So here we are served up former prodigies who are now on the brink of hostility and/or incompetence.

We have an anxious tennis star, a bored playwright married to a nervous neurologist, and a stock market wizard who's now widowed, paranoid, and snappish. They return to the nest for recharging, and runs into an unexpected reunion with their absentee father. Royal, the repentant patriarch, starts out scheming and ends up earnestly trying to make amends, but succeeds only up to the level of clumsy.

Exaggerations

The characters, said to be inspired by J.D. Salinger's Glass family, are conceived and fleshed out in the spirit of overstatement. Margo, the playwright, wears eye makeup like a panda and has successfully kept her smoking a tight secret for over two decades. The stockbroker who lost his wife in a plane crash is overly concerned with the safety of his kids, whom he keeps in red sweat suits identical to his own so they can easily locate each other in case of an emergency.

Talk about wardrobe: The tennis star never takes off his sporting gear, including head and wristbands. His best friend, the family hanger-on, is a drug-propelled novelist who is constantly clad in the fringed leather jacket of the American Wild West, his subject of choice.

This is just the tip of the plague. Mercifully, and deftly, the exaggerations are evened out by largely minimalist performances from Gwyneth Paltrow, Luke Wilson, Anjelica Huston, Ben Stiller, and Danny Glover, rendering the movie an excellent showcase of ensemble under-acting.

This doesn't apply to Gene Hackman as Royal. The character was written with him in mind, and although he says he's "not crazy about having people write things for me," he assumes the role with relish, as though he is merrily rediscovering his funny bone and confirming yet again exactly what drives him as an actor of reputable range: "I like the surprise of trying to fit into something that's not somebody's idea of me."

Breakdowns

Not one character in the whole film begs for sympathy, even when serious breakdowns lurk in every corner of the Tenenbaum home, a brownstone in Harlem that, Director Wes Anderson points out, is essential to the story. The narrative specifies chapters in the characters' lives that transpire in places as far-flung as Antarctica, Paris, India, and Jamaica. Still, it is within the brownstone's confines that they find loose ends begging to be tied up.

When the Tenenbaum children return, they do so to individual bedrooms that have been kept exactly as when they flew the coop. This makes both the turnaround in their adult personali-

HOME/ A15

Viewer power

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

PEOPLE keep complaining about programming on TV today—how lousy shows stay on for years, while good programs lose out in the ratings race, and are junked after only a season, or less. What, they groan, can they do about this terrible situation? Do good shows really have to fall victim to the inexorable ratings factor? Not always—especially if you fight for your favorite show by making use of collective viewer power. On your own, your pleas may fall on deaf ears, but if hundreds of viewers urge our TV networks to retain certain shows, they could very well pay attention.

The logic here is that ratings are based on viewership numbers, so if those numbers are down but hundreds of viewers fight for the retention of a show, TV executives are bound to listen because the numbers are also speaking, albeit in a different way.

TV executives could even place greater weight on the petitioning viewers' action because it takes special commitment to write letters to TV stations, and this fervor impresses some TV channels' decision makers.

The hope is that advertisers will also be impressed by this special commitment, and place their commercials in the shows being fought for by viewers, thus assuring their retention on the tube.

Is this a pipe dream? No, say some observers of the television scene, who recall that, on TV, some of the most popular and critically acclaimed programs were in great danger of being yanked out of the tube in their first few months of telecasting.

What prolonged their stay on TV? The concerted efforts of hundreds of diehard fans, who made full, creative and dynamic use of viewer power to keep their favorite shows on the TV screen.

The shows they successfully fought for are truly impressive success stories—"Cheers," "Cagney and Lacey," "Hill Street Blues," "Designing Women," "Thirtysomething," "Seinfeld" and "Friends"!

If their fans didn't fight for them, these shows wouldn't have gone on to be viewed by millions, win awards, run for years and years, and make big stars of some of their regular cast members.

So, list down your favorite shows, find out which of them are in trouble, and organize your friends, family members and neighbors into letter-writing brigades to keep those languishing shows on the TV screen.

Great ratings are fine, but they shouldn't be the only reason why shows stay on the tube. Good shows are their own reason for being, and a concerted use of viewer power can keep them on TV—where they deserve to be.

Movies on TV

ON HBO, Thursday, March 28 at 11 a.m., "The Fugitive." 1:15 p.m., "Unforgiven." 5 p.m., "Missing."

Friday, March 29 at 7:15 p.m., "Allan Quatermain and the Lost City of Gold." 11 p.m., "Sex and the City: Episode 31, "Where There's Smoke"; 32, "Politically Erect; 33, "Attack of the 5'10" Woman."

Saturday, March 30, at 8 a.m., "Into the Arms of Strangers: Stories of the Kindertransport." 11 a.m., "Ghost." 2 p.m., "Erin Brockovich." 12:20 a.m., "Introducing Dorothy Dandrige: A True Story." 2:15 a.m., "Mother Night."

Sunday, March 31, at 3 p.m., Missing." 8 p.m., "Girl, Interrupted."

On the Cinemax Channel: March 28 at 7:45 a.m., "Shakespeare in Love." 10:30 p.m., "What Planet Are You From?" 5:15 a.m., "Celebrity Profiles: Drew Barrymore."

March 29 at 4 p.m., "Riders of the Purple Sage." 10:30 p.m., "Deep Blue Sea."

March 30 at 2 p.m., "The Ten Commandments." 12:05 a.m., "8 MM."

March 31 at 8:15 a.m., "Leaving Normal." 11:45 a.m., "The Big Heist." 12:20 a.m., "Mercy." 5 a.m., "Pursuit of Happiness."

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BEST DIRECTOR Ron Howard
BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS Jennifer Connelly
BEST ADAPTED SCREENPLAY Akiva Goldsman
WINNER 4 GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS
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BEST SUPPORTING ACTRESS
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RUSSELL CROWE
A BEAUTIFUL MIND
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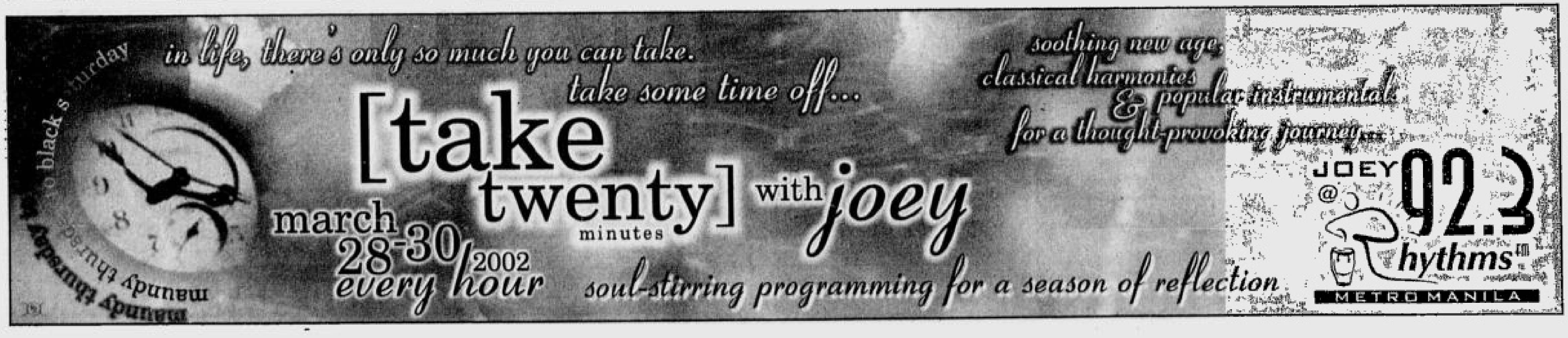

maundy thursday to black saturday
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every hour
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soul-stirring programming for a season of reflection
JOEY @ 92.3 Rhythms FM
METRO MANILA

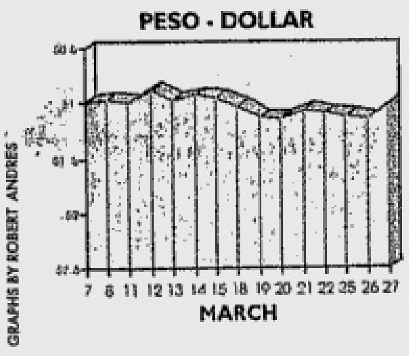
BUSINESS

Editor **Raul O. Marcelo** *Assistant Editor* **Corrie S. Narisma**

Manufacturing output still down

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱51.005 = $1

As of 5 p.m., March 27, 2002

¥132.82 = $1

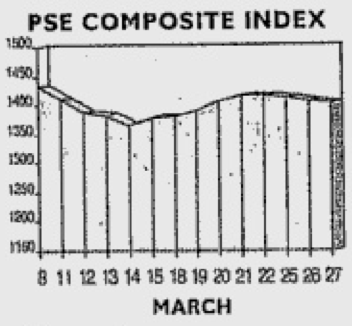
As of 5 p.m., March 27, 2002

GOLD: $297/297.50

per ounce Hong Kong, March 27, 2002

STOCK MARKET

Stocks lower



(See stock market report on Page B2)

SHARES ended slightly lower yesterday as investors stayed sidelined ahead of the long Easter holiday. The Philippine main index closed almost flat, just 0.25 percent lower or 3.51 points down, at 1,403.62 points as the bourse closed at noon.

The market will be closed today and Friday due to public holidays. The bourse will resume trading on Monday.

Value turnover dropped to P397.70 million from Tuesday's P470.40 million, with 32 gainers and 20 losers. There were 35 stocks unchanged.

Analysts expected the market to continue consolidating after the Easter break given the lack of inspiring leads.

BPI Securities stock analyst Roberto Cano said he expected the release of first quarter corporate earnings to set the direction for the market.

"Some investors do not want to have positions in the market given the long weekend and considering that there were bomb scares the past week," said AB Capital stock analyst Jose Vistan.

"There is an emerging peace and order concern," he said.

Philippine police have stepped up security measures around the country since last week after at least 10 unexploded home-made bombs were found in Manila and other cities.

Reuters

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S key manufacturing output contracted by 0.5 percent in January from the year-ago level as domestic producers awaited better economic prospects in major markets, particularly the United States.

The slight fall in January compared favorably with the 11-percent decline in December, boosting hopes of a turnaround in this sector.

The manufacturing sector's production has been falling for five months now as demand suffered from the Sept. 11 attacks in the United States as well as the US and Japanese recession.

The National Statistics Office yesterday said gainers, in terms of volume of production, were mostly manufacturers of basic goods such as food, footwear/clothing and transport equipment. This raised concerns that domestic production was still dependent on domestic demand rather than improving exports.

Food manufacturing volume was up by 52.6 percent; footwear/clothing, 63.9 percent and transport equipment, 14.7 percent.

A double-digit contraction was recorded in the following sectors: petroleum products (24.4 percent), paper and paper products (31.6 percent), electrical machinery (33.8 percent), furniture and fixtures (45.3 percent), miscellaneous manufactures (23.9 percent) and rubber products (13.4 percent).

Despite the fall in the volume of production, the NSO said the value of manufacturing production grew by 3.4 percent in January from 0.3 percent in December.

DBS Vickers Securities analyst Jomar Lacson said that despite the improvement in the manufacturing volume for January, there was no clear sign of an immediate recovery for this sector.

"We're still seeing the same trend as seen last year," Lacson said, noting that the gains in volume of production registered by some sectors were still fueled by domestic consumption.

Other analysts, however, said the January figure indicated sustained recovery in the manufacturing sector, the lynchpin of the economy.

They said merchandise exports were also on a recovery path—having fallen 9 percent from a year earlier in January from a 24.4 percent fall in December.

For the month of January, imports slumped by 18.7 percent from a year ago level, the worst contraction in seven years.

The government is hoping to see an expansion in this year's exports by one to 1.5 percent.

Also, the NSO reported that the average capacity utilization rate of factories in the Philippines last January was 74.4 percent. Sectors that posted more than 80 percent of capacity utilization were: machinery excluding electrical, rubber products, petroleum products and electrical machinery.

With a report from AFP

2001 OFW remittances lower by 8%

By Clarissa S. Batino

DOLLAR remittances of overseas Filipinos dropped by 8.1 percent or $490 million to $5.56 billion last year from $6.05 billion in the previous year, data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the decline in dollar remittances of overseas Filipino workers or OFWs was consistent with the decrease in the number of Filipinos working abroad.

Last year, there were 100,000 less Filipinos deployed overseas from 4.8 million in 2000. This was based on a survey conducted by the Commission on Filipino Overseas, an attached agency of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

OFWS/ B2

Ecozone investments fall 93%

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

INVESTMENTS in economic zones slackened sharply in the first two months this year as prospects for recovery in the country's export markets remained dim.

The Philippine Economic Zone Authority reported that investments nose-dived 93.27 percent to P848 million in the first two months of the year from P12.602 billion in the same period last year.

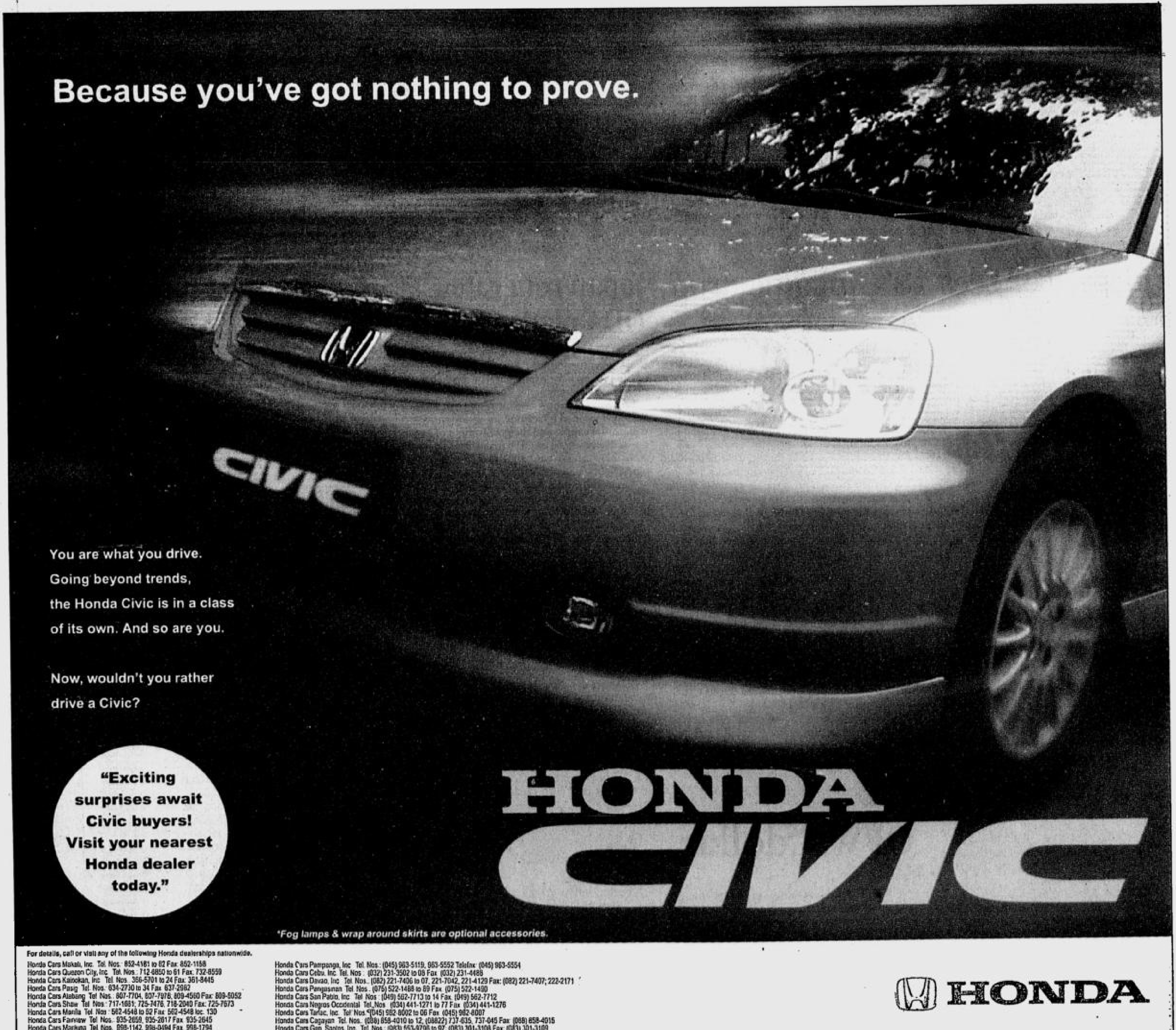
At this rate, Peza is unlikely to meet even a quarter of its P50-billion investment target for this year. The top investments during the period were Taiwan's Greenwood Home Décor Inc.'s P51.5-million furniture factory; Kohzan Cavite Inc.'s P30.775-million production facility for magnet-optical disk drives, and T&H Furnishing Industries Inc.'s P20-million expansion project to produce more ship components.

Investments in government and private ecozones have been on a retreat since last year when new and expansion projects fell by more than half to a new five-year low of roughly P31 billion.

Peza blamed weak export markets, particularly the US and Japan (the biggest buyers of Philippine exports), for the declining investment inflow into economic zones.

The agency cited the depressed demand for computers and electronic gadgets in the world's biggest economies for faltering exports of semiconductors, the country's main export product. Aside from a gloomy market, concerns in security and labor activism have also conspired to dishearten investors to put up their plants in the country.

Peza's scanty investments as well as the 50-percent drop in BOI investments to P4.13 billion in the first two months of the year could also indicate the changing tide of foreign investment flows in Asia as foreign businessmen put more money in China than in Southeast Asia.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HONDA

PAL seen flying into ₱1.8-B loss

PHILIPPINE Airlines Inc. expects to post a net loss of up to P1.8 billion in the current year to March due to the impact of terrorism fears, the flag carrier's president said Wednesday.

"We think that we will end up the year (with a loss of) somewhere between P1.6 billion and P1.8 billion," PAL president Avelino Zapanta told AFP-owned financial news service AFX-Asia.

In the previous year, the airline made a net profit of P436.5 million.

Reduced passenger traffic following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in the United States, as well as travel warnings about the Philippines issued in some major tourist markets, would push PAL into the red, he added.

Zapanta stressed that the expected loss would be significantly lower than the airline's worst-case prediction late last year of a P2.7-billion net loss.

PAL incurred a net loss of P2.1 billion between September and November last year, he said.

"Starting December, things started to change for the better so we think that we will not get anywhere near that worst case scenario," he said.

"What made things worse is the negative travel advisory by Japan, which influenced other countries such as Britain, France, United States and Canada. It influenced to a great degree the rest of the world."

The travel advisories followed kidnappings mostly in the southern Philippines, the base for Abu Sayyaf guerrillas with alleged links to Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida network. *AFP*

Bourse ordered to clear way for Itogon's new shares

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission has ordered the Philippine Stock Exchange to clear the way for the listing of new shares issued by Itogon Suyoc Mines Inc. to Philweb.com Inc.

In an order issued on Monday, the SEC rejected the stock exchange's appeal against the transaction.

Itogon Suyoc, which sold a 40-percent stake to Philweb, "badly needed to seek investments and additional capital infusion to resurrect its operations," the commission ruled.

The stock exchange's general rule is that the issuer must undertake a stock rights offering as a requirement before it can list additional shares to ensure that the rights of the minority are protected.

Itogon Suyoc sought an exemption from this rule, citing its situation as a moribund company and arguing that a rights offering was impossible since no underwriter would be willing to assume the risks.

"We, therefore, find Itogon Suyoc's request for exemption from the rule to be reasonable," the SEC said, noting that about 91 percent of Itogon Suyoc's stockholders had already approved the deal with Philweb and waived their preemptive rights to a stock rights offering.

"Conversely, we find the exchange to have exceeded its discretion and gone overboard in the application of the rule by denying Itogon Suyoc this exemption. The commission, therefore, must correct the same under its supervisory powers over the exchange as well as its oversight functions," it said.

Despite a previous order from the SEC, the stock exchange still refused to list the new shares sold to Philweb at a price discount of more than 10 percent against the average market price.

For its part, Itogon Suyoc took in Philweb as a strategic investor to help it migrate into the more viable technology business.

Failing to get the PSE's approval, the company appealed for intervention from the SEC.

"The exchange's insistence on Itogon Suyoc's first undertaking a rights offer would effectively prevent Itogon Suyoc from pursuing the second course of action and thereby preclude the corporation from any opportunity that can probably bail the corporation out of its present predicament," the SEC said.

JP Morgan sees rise in key rates in fourth quarter

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas is seen raising its overnight rates by a quarter-of-a-percentage point in the fourth quarter.

In a recent report, US investment firm JP Morgan Chase & Co. said most countries in Asia, including the Philippines, would have to raise key rates in the last quarter in line with an expected rebound in the US economy.

JP Morgan had expected the BSP to keep its low interest rates until the first quarter of next year.

Bangko Sentral Governor Rafael Buenaventura said earlier the country's interest rates would shadow movements in the United States.

JP Morgan said with the US economy showing signs of an earlier-than-expected recovery, the Philippines and its neighbors would have to tighten their policy rates earlier than planned.

The investment firm stressed, however, that any adjustment in the country's policy rates would have to be done through the foreign exchange market.

It said that in line with its assessment of an early rates hike, the peso would likely appreciate to 49 to a dollar by the end of the year from 49.50 in the third quarter and 50 in the second quarter.

Globe set to issue up to $325M in bonds

GLOBE Telecom Inc., the country's second largest mobile phone operator, said Wednesday it was raising the size of its issuance program for 10-year bonds this year to up to $325 million from $300 million.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, the company said the board of directors had adjusted the maximum size of the issuance to up to $325 million. It gave no further details.

In February, the firm said it would issue up to $300 million of 10-year bonds in one or more offerings this year.

In January at an investors briefing, the company said it was looking at capital expenditure of about $258 million this year to grow its business.

Earlier this month, the firm said it planned to offer $175 million worth of 10-year fixed rate senior notes with the proceeds earmarked for expansion of its wireless network and for working capital needs.

Globe is a joint venture of local conglomerate Ayala Corp., Singapore Telecommunications and Deutsche Telekom AG. *Reuters*

Electricity for far-flung areas assured

By Ronnel W. Domingo

ENERGY Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. yesterday assured that electricity services to rural areas would continue despite the National Power Corp.'s threat to cut off supply to electric cooperatives with unpaid bills.

"Napocor will remain a government-owned and -controlled corporation that is mandated to push the program on rural electrification," Perez said in a statement.

He noted that while the Electric Power Industry Reform Act ordered the privatization of Napocor's assets, it also directed the power firm to retain control of the "small power utilities group," of "Spug".

Spug is tasked to provide electricity to areas not connected to Napocor's main grids like small islands and mountain villages.

"Electricity is one of the main ingredients of development," Perez noted. "We must strive to bring light to these remote areas."

The energy chief added that Napocor's new focus would give boost to the government's "O-Ilaw" rural electrification program.

O-Ilaw aims to energize about 7,000 barangays that remain without electricity. The country has a total of 42,000 barangays.

Perez said the energy department was readying a missionary electrification development plan that would detail the energization program.

This will include capital investment and operations for possible new power plants and other facilities needed in areas off the main grids, he said.

Perez said the energy department would issue the guidelines in May.

He added that aside from providing electricity to far-flung areas, Napocor's Spug would also put up cables and posts in areas that showed potential growth in demand.

Early this month, Napocor cut off power supply to Aklan when the local electric cooperative failed to settle P104 million in unpaid bills.

According to Napocor data, 19 small-island cooperatives owe the power firm at least P547 million that have accumulated over the years.

A hundred cooperatives hooked up to the main grids, meanwhile, owe Napocor a total of P6.5 billion.

Quedancor sees 18% income drop

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE QUEDAN Rural Credit and Guarantee Corp. has disclosed that profits probably fell 18 percent last year to P7.7 million.

In an interview, Quedancor president Nelson Buenaflor attributed the estimated drop in the state-run firm's net income to back payments to its employees.

Buenaflor said Quedancor paid some P131.98 million for personal services last year from P94 million the previous year. "These are back claims of employees," he disclosed.

Quedancor is the only government-owned corporation that grants collateral-free credit to the agriculture sector and to small and medium-scale enterprises.

Buenaflor reported a 31-percent increase in Quedancor's loan disbursements last year.

Loan disbursements to the agriculture, fishery and to the informal sector was estimated to have risen to P1.2 billion last year from P914 million struck in 2000.

Buenaflor said the state-owned lending firm made up for the continuous slump in lending to the agricultural sector last year.

"There was a sudden shift in the composition of our portfolio. Because private banks have reduced their exposure to agricultural projects, our guarantee operations have gone down, and 70 percent of our clients have availed of our direct lending facilities," he reported.

He said this was also an indication that there was a declining participation of private financial institutions in the guarantee programs, which started as a way to help the agriculture sector cope with the 1997-1998 Asian financial crisis.

In 1998, local banks' loan exposure to agriculture was 7 percent of their total loan portfolio. It further declined to 0.6 percent in 1999.

Buenaflor noted that of Quedancor's P1 billion in loanable funds, some P750 million were acquired through its lending programs, while an estimated P300 million were availed through guarantee operations.

Quedancor's lending programs were funded mainly by special allocations from different government agencies, with Quedancor acting as fund manager.

Part of Quedancor's direct lending schemes is the income augmentation program for government employees.

DISCLOSURES

PRIMEX Corp.'s 128,549,999 previously locked-up common shares will again be tradable starting April 1.

* * *

THE INITIAL listing of 1,569,491,900 common shares by **Salcon Power Corp.** is set for April 2.

* * *

GLOBE Telecom Inc. has adjusted the maximum size of the issuance of 10-year US bonds to $325 million from $300 million.

* * *

INTERNATIONAL Container Terminal Services Inc. will hold its annual stockholders meeting on April 18, 10 a.m., at the Rigodon Ballroom of the Peninsula Manila. Record date is March 8. The company also clarified that its debt level dropped further to P2.5 billion, not $2.5 billion as earlier disclosed.

* * *

FILIPINO Fund Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 14, 3 p.m., at the Dusit Hotel Nikko. Record date is March 15.

* * *

THE MANAGEMENT of **Vitarich Corp.** said it was not aware of any information that might have affected the value and trading of its shares on March 22.

* * *

EXPRESS Holdings Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of **JG Summit Holdings Inc.**, acquired an additional 2,200,000 shares of **Robinsons Land Corp.** at P1.76 per share on March 22. ***Compiled by Ray Leyesa, PDI Research***

Japan reiterates ODA pledge for RP

THE JAPANESE government has expressed continuous support for the development projects of the Philippines despite current difficulties in the global economy.

"Although Japan continues to find itself heavily burdened by serious economic and fiscal strains, the people and the government of Japan are still committed to ODA (or official development assistance) contributions to the Philippines," government documents showed.

Japan has committed roughly P40 billion in ODA loans to the Philippines as of end-September 2001, according to an official report.

Japan is the biggest bilateral donor of the Philippines since the 1970s. Even in the recently concluded Consultative Group meeting of the Philippines with donor-communities early this month, it was reported that Japan accounted for bulk of the total $2.8 billion in financial assistance committed by foreign lenders to the Philippines.

The Philippines is the third largest user of Japanese ODA as of 1999 after China and Indonesia with a cumulative ODA portfolio of $8.839 billion.

ODAs are concessional, or soft, loans granted by bilateral and multilateral institutions in support of development projects undertaken by the government.

The biggest component of the Japan ODA from January-September 2001 was the yen loan packages funding nine projects with a total cost of P21.6 billion. It comprises the bulk, or 54 percent, of the total ODA funds granted during the period.

OFWs' dollar . . .

From page B1

The BSP governor, however, noted that an expanded monitoring coverage of the central bank showed that last year's dollar inflow from OFWs rose by 3.1 percent to $6.235 billion. This was because the monitoring included not only the big banks but also thrift banks and the money-changing subsidiaries of commercial banks.

The central bank said it had noticed that some of the remittances were being coursed through smaller banks or even money changers affiliated with the big banks.

A healthy inflow of dollars helps keep the peso stable. Despite the lower remittance last year, the peso traded within the range of 50.90 to 51.20 to a dollar.

The central bank said a healthy remittance should be one of the factors that would help not only to push up the peso but also to trigger economic growth despite the weakness in the global economy.

The OFWs' remittances help the economy to cope with the lower foreign exchange receipts from exports, which contracted by 15 percent last year.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Wednesday, March 27, 2002)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Bank of the Phil. Islands	67	67.5	67	67	190,200
China Banking Corp.	610	610	610	610	3,500
Citystate Savings Bank	14.25	14.25	14.25	14.25	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	37	37	36.5	36.5	164,900
First E-Bank Corp.	2.36	2.44	2.34	2.44	179,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	44	44	43.5	44	156,100
Phil. Savings Bank	29	29	29	29	5,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	21.25	21.5	21.25	21.5	7,500
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	162,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.39	0.5	0.39	0.48	480,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.1	249,000
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1030	1055	1015	1055	64,120
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broad Corp.	33.5	33.5	33	33.5	7,000
Digital Telecom Phils. Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.68	0.69	830,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	790	805	790	800	24,330
Ipeople Inc.	0.84	0.84	0.83	0.83	50,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.06	0.06	0.06	0.06	2,300,000
Piltel	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	500,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	535	535	530	535	47,070
Ivantage Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	100,000
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	34,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	30	30	30	30	21,200
Manila Electric Co. B	44.5	44.5	44	44.5	231,600
Petron Corp.	1.82	1.82	1.78	1.78	4,855,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	299,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	10,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	5.7	5.7	5.7	5.7	7,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.75	13	12.75	13	177,200
La Tondeña Distillers Inc.	22.75	23.25	22.75	23.25	27,000
RFM Corp.	1.52	1.54	1.52	1.54	124,000
Swift Food Inc.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	5,000
San Miguel Corp. A	47	47.5	47	47.5	191,000
San Miguel Corp. B	62.5	62.5	61	62	487,200
Universal Robina Corp.	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	258,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	20,000
Ayala Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.3	6.4	10,926,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	2	2	1.94	1.98	2,435,000
A. Soriano Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	4,060,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.0075	0.007	0.0075	3,000,000
Anglo Phil. Holdings Corp.	0.32	0.39	0.32	0.39	170,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	10,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.78	0.79	0.78	0.79	3,000,000
Ebecom Holdings Inc.	0.1	0.105	0.1	0.1	500,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	30,000
First Phil Hldgs. Corp.	30.5	30.5	30.5	30.5	21,100
Ionics Inc.	7.9	7.9	7.8	7.8	23,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.86	1.9	1.86	1.9	258,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	130,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.62	0.65	0.62	0.65	40,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	4,530,000
Music Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	50,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	10,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	20,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	10,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.3	0.34	0.3	0.34	270,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	20,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	100,000
Pryce Corp.	0.08	0.08	0.075	0.075	14,100,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp.	0.53	0.54	0.53	0.54	4,210,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	20,000
Manila Jockey Club	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	16,500
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	34	34	33	33.5	376,100
DMCI Holdings Incf.- Pref.	770	775	770	775	1,610
Equitable PCI Bank-War	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	4,000
Globe Telecom Hldg. (Pdr)	785	795	785	795	2,100
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0006	0.0006	0.0004	0.0004	409,000,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	8	8	8	8	5,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.9	7	6.8	6.9	3,928,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	3,450,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.48	0.49	0.48	0.49	2,840,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,410,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2.32	2.36	2.32	2.34	1,561,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	10,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.5	8,716,000
MINING					
Itogon-Suyoc Mines A	0.042	0.042	0.041	0.042	12,800,000
Itogon-Suyoc Mines B	0.04	0.04	0.04	0.04	1,000,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. A	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	1,100,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.215	0.215	0.215	0.215	600,000
Omico Corp.	0.0044	0.0046	0.0044	0.0046	10,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	450,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	800,000
OIL					
Interport Res.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	3,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	4,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	30,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,663,320	94,792,095.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	503,020,010	212,326,260.00
PRO	21,915,000	89,838,520.00
Mining	26,750,000	1,296,200.00
OIL	10,030,000	47,000.00
GRAND TOTALS:	563,378,330	398,300,075.00

	AVERAGES	
Banks & Fin Svc	579.71	UP 0.33
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,905.59	DOWN 11.50
PRO	612.97	UP 3.93
Mining	1,326.05	UP 12.60
OIL	1.56	DOWN 0.03
All Shares Index	746.58	UP 1.32
Composite	1,403.62	DOWN 3.51

NO. OF ADVANCES: 32; NO. OF DECLINES: 20;
NO. OF UNCHANGED: 35; NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 87;
NO. OF TRADES: 1,552

CURRENCIES

March 27, 2002

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.140121	1.000000	51.1480
Japan	Yen	0.008573	0.007519	0.3846
United Kingdom	Pound	1.627066	1.427100	72.9933
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.146190	0.128223	6.5584
Switzerland	Franc	0.683730	0.599700	30.6735
Canada	Dollar	0.716561	0.628496	32.1463
Singapore	Dollar	0.616449	0.540687	27.6551
Australia	Dollar	0.601329	0.527426	26.9768
Bahrain	Dinar	3.024354	2.652661	135.6783
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.304033	0.266667	13.6395
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MOTORING

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

Lives of innocent people are in the drivers' hands

By Tessa R. Salazar

DRIVING and operating a public vehicle require diligence "beyond that of a good father." That is what the law states.

Land Transportation Office traffic safety education chief Daisy Jacobo stressed this in reaction to a March 20 accident when a BLTBCo bus turned turtle several times and landed on a shallow ravine somewhere in Sitio Bayabasan, Barangay Aga in Nasugbu, Batangas. The force and speed of the bus felled seven mango trees and one concrete post.

THE KILLER bus, bound for Calatagan, wiped out seven mango trees and one concrete post.

The police report stated that the right front wheel got separated from the rest of the bus bound for Calatagan, Batangas, causing it to lose control. The driver, Remer N. Mendoza, 36, had no driver's license but only a temporary operator's permit.

Passengers' plight

About 40 passengers were aboard the bus. These included children, teenagers and elders all coming home for the long summer break. One of them, Ma. Lourdes Duralisa Cedo, a mother of three and at 43 already a grandmother, died on the spot. Her skull was shattered, her body battered, her belongings, as well as her earrings (along with much of her ears), were missing.

Ma. Lourdes was the mother of 22-year-old INQUIRER production specialist Alden Cedo.

The police earlier indicated five other people had died. Witnesses in Nasugbu claim, however, that more than 30 passengers could have already died, as most of the injured were in critical condition in the hospitals.

2 separate complaints

Jacobo advised the family's victims to file two separate complaints before the court, one criminal and one civil case to find out who should answer for the accident. Negligence, however, should be proven in court, she added.

She added that families' victims should always secure an accident report before filing a complaint. It would help if witnesses were there to buttress the families' claims.

"In the court, cases could be filed. If they file at the LTO and the LTFRB, that does not preclude them from filing a parallel complaint in a court of competent jurisdiction." She added that one should always ask for an accident sketch and ask for the police investigator's name.

This reporter, after coming from the police station, went to the BLTBCo. in Nasugbu, Batangas, to confirm if the right front wheel did, indeed, fall off or the accident was a result of overspeeding. The BLTB staff refused to be interviewed. She tried taking pictures of the killer bus but her film was confiscated, as well as her tape. The BLTB guard, who refused to show his ID, threatened her and her companions.

Advice

Jacobo stated that operators are advised to always conduct pretrip inspections, especially during the summer vacation when buses' schedules are most hectic. Operators should always supervise their employees, especially those in charge of performing pretrip inspections, she said.

Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board chair Dante Lantin said in a phone interview that he has dispatched somebody to check on the accident.

"I coordinated with the insurance company already. The victim's families will receive P50,000. Additional damages other than that, the victim's families will have to settle it with the regular court," he said.

Victims of families, he said, are free to file criminal and civil suits but this would no longer be under LTFRB's jurisdiction. He said, however, that he didn't find anything unusual with the bus firm's operations.

"I checked the records of the bus and they are in order. It has a franchise and the franchise was extended. The bus was on route when the accident occurred." Lantin said the police report indicates that it would be an accident. Negligence, he said, should be proven in court.

Jacobo's advice to drivers is timely amid the Holy Week and summer holidays.

One catchy acronym could spell the difference between tragedy and safety. It's called BLOWBAGA: Battery, Light, Oil, Water, Brake, Air or tire, Gas and Accessories. Other car care tips include checking the tire rod, and cleaning and properly positioning rearview mirrors (you should be able to see at least 200 feet behind you with the mirrors, and you should see oncoming vehicles on the side, and not at the rear of your vehicle).

Formula One = Megabucks

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

FORMULA One, the world's premier and most glamorous autoracing series, is a global megabucks industry, as shown by the following data:

Michael Schumacher, who is seeking his fifth world driver's title this season at the wheel of a Ferrari, is the world's highest paid sportsman.

Last year, 75 percent of the company that owns the Formula One television rights was sold for nearly US$1.4 billion. The man who guides and presides over F1's business and TV rights, Bernie Ecclestone, is one of Britain's richest men. In 2000, Ecclestone sold 37.5 percent of Formula One to a US investment banker for $712 million. When Ford bought a Formula One team in 1999 to race under the name of its Jaguar brand, it paid $154 million. Renault acquired the Benetton team in 2000 for $120 million.

The budgets of the 11 remaining teams in Formula One (Prost Grand Prix, the twelfth team, went bankrupt and its assets were liquidated in France in January) will total $1.4 billion this year.

There are 17 F1 races at 17 different venues in Europe, South America, North America and Asia from March to October 2002. So the teams (including engineers, managers and technicians), cars and pit stop equipment have to be flown from one venue to another in four continents—all of which costs a lot of money. For instance, Toyota, which joined the F1 circuit for the first time this year, flew 800 employees to Melbourne last March 3 for this season's opening race, the Australian Grand Prix (GP). Toyota's F1 project is based in Cologne, Germany.

The right to stage a Formula One race costs millions of dollars. For example, the British GP goes for $15 million per race and Melbourne pays Formula One an estimated $10 million each year for the right to host the Australian GP. At present, the only Asian countries that have the facilities and funds to stage an F1 Grand Prix are Malaysia and Japan.

Formula One promoters claim that the sport attracted 54 billion TV "views" of over 200 TV networks worldwide last year. Despite these TV ratings, both the previous owner and last year's buyer of F1's TV rights went bankrupt; billions of dollars in debt.

To pay back bank loans and to meet the ever-escalating fees demanded by Formula One for the right to stage a race, promoters and race track owners are renovating their facilities, investing in more technology and expanding seating capacity. Silverstone, venue of the British GP, is undergoing a $56 million renovation while Hockenheim track, site of the German GP, is increasing seating capacity from 83,000 to 120,000. An average of about 100,000 spectators attend each race.

Meanwhile, car manufacturers that support or own F1 teams view with trepidation the approach of the year 2006, when tobacco sponsorship for sports in Europe ends. The carmakers may try to source more money from F1's TV rights when the cigarette firms pull out.

F1 promoters and track owners are banking on Michael Schumacher to bring in the business. Formula One fans are watching to see whether the German race driver will equal or maybe even surpass the record of five F1 Driver's Championship titles won by Spaniard Juan Manuel Fangio in 1957.

Michael (his brother Ralf drives for BMW-Williams and won the Malaysian GP the other Sunday) has plenty of time to achieve his goal, since at age 33 he already has four titles under his belt and he still has three seasons left on his contract with Ferrari. People all over the world who have invested in F1 racing hope that Michael will keep on driving every year until then . . . or until they can pay back their creditors.

(With reports from IHT)

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: If God intended man to smoke, He would have set him on fire.

* * *

(E-mail comments to asevilla @inquirer.com.ph)

Jeepneys may soon have clean diesel engines

By Romulo O. Ponte
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SAN PABLO CITY—Within the year, about 1.4 million operators and drivers of diesel-fueled vehicles can already apply for loans to buy reconditioned diesel engines that meet the emission standards required under Republic Act 8749 or the Clean Air Act of 1999 to replace their old rundown ones.

This was disclosed by Environment Secretary Heherson T. Alvarez during the recent signing of a memorandum of agreement among the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the Federation of Jeepney Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines (Fejodap), Pilipinas Engine Re-manufacturing and Reconditioning Corp. and Petron Corp.

The DENR and the public transport sector signed last September a memorandum of understanding to map out the details of cleaning diesel engines, said a press report sent to the INQUIRER by Lourdez M. Bucay, DENR Southern Tagalog public affairs office chief.

Under the MOA, the DENR, through the Natural Resources Development Corp., would give financial assistance or "seed money" to the members of Fejodap to buy remanufactured engines together with emission devices from the PERRC.

The Fejodap, on the other hand, will collect daily installments from every member, which will be remitted weekly to the NRDC.

PERRC's role will be to provide warrants and services for the engines, training of operators and drivers on the proper care of the engines.

The agreement also provides that Petron gasoline stations all over the country perform emission testing and assign technical experts who will put order, install emission control devises and clean diesel fuel.

Of the 3.7 million registered vehicles in the country, the DENR said 1.4 million are using crude oil as fuel, like those used by jeepneys and taxicabs.

Smoke coming from these vehicles is the primary source of air pollution.

Trans Sport Show starts April 6

THE COUNTRY'S premier motoring exposition, Trans Sport Show 2002 is slated on April 6-14 at the Megatrade Hall of SM Megamall B. Ortigas Center, Edsa, Mandaluyong City.

TradeShow International Inc., the show's organizer decided that this year's theme will be on "Auto Design Evolution." The theme will focus on cars with timeless designs that have evolved, through years of refinement, into a more modern and more driver friendly versions while still retaining original design heritage.

The featured marque, Porsche, through the Porsche Club of the Philippines will present beautifully restored Porsche 356s representing the model's evolution from the Porsche 356 Series A, B and C. Likewise, The BMW Z Club Philippines will have a thematic display of four different BMW Z roadsters and a photo archive of BMW's classic sports cars, from prewar to the present.

The show's main highlight is the Trans Sport Show Cup—Open Class Car Competition. More than 50 meticulously prepared European and Japanese cars, from classics to contemporary, will compete for class honors and the top plum of "Best of Show." Last year's "Best of Show" winner was the 1997 BMW 3161 owned by Larry Ignacio. It is the first time in the history of Trans Sport Show that the top award went to a modern car, breaking the domination of classic and vintage cars for many years.

Another much awaited program of the show is the selection of this year's Ms Trans Sport Show. Conceptualized in 1998, it is open to all promotional girls of corporate exhibitors at the show. It is not only the personality that counts, but also the contestant's knowledge of the product that she is promoting.

Trans Sport Show is also the place to visit if you are in need of car care products, car accessories, wheels, tires, automotive maintenance equipment and other related services. It is the preferred venue of companies in the automotive field to showcase their latest products to the motoring public.

Petron offers roadside assistance to motorists

FRESH from winning an Anvil Award of Excellence for a program in support of service, Petron "Lakbay Alalay" once again is offering roadside assistance to motorists this Holy Week.

"Lakbay Alalay" camps will provide the very services lauded by the Public Relations Society of the Philippines at the 37th Anvil Awards. These include providing motorists with free medical assistance, cell phone facilities, free drinking water, diaper change booths, clean restrooms, towing services and accredited mechanics.

The pioneer in roadside assistance programs, "Lakbay Alalay" has set up additional camps this year to give way to insistent public demand. Apart from its "original" camps along the South and North tollways, Lakbay Alalay will likewise be present in Baguio, Tagaytay, Batangas, Laguna and Quezon from March 27 to 31.

Ferrari to unleash F2002 in Brazil; Macky's F1 Club

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

THE FLOW of traffic in the city will be as smooth as silk. You know the reason. Holy Week: It empties the city of humanity.

It also happens during the Christmas holidays, on All Saints' Day.

If only for the sheer joy of watching the city free of traffic jams, why can't we have two sets of both?

Two Holy Weeks. Two Christmases. Two All Saints' Days.

Each company force will have to be split in the matter of leaving for the provinces so as not to disrupt operations.

The first batch leaves on the year's first Holy Week (March), the second batch the second Holy Week (August?). And so on and so forth.

What do you think?

Ah, this is all wishful thinking.

But given the terrible traffic mess that we have to endure almost yearlong, it isn't bad to dream, if not wish. Right?

Anyway, always be very careful while behind that wheel. Accidents do not choose roads. They are always partial to those that are reckless.

You may be just cruising in the traffic-free city, breezing through the countryside or joyriding on the beach.

But, hey, wherever you are, whatever you intend to do this Holy Week, don't forget to reflect on the Passion, Death and Resurrection of our dear Jesus Christ, the only Lord we have in this world.

Happy Easter.

* * *

The reasons have not been explained thoroughly enough. But Ferrari will allow Michael "Schumi" Schumacher to use its new F2002 car in the Brazilian Grand Prix on Sunday.

Except to say that the machine is sufficiently reliable to race, Ferrari has not revealed the true reasons.

"The new car has proved to be quick and reliable," said team chief Jean Todt. "The development program on the new car which has gone ahead over the past few weeks means we are able to take the F2002 to the Interlagos race."

* * *

Surprisingly, Brazilian Rubens Barrichello will use the old F2001 car in his home event.

What could be the reason behind this?

Remember that Barrichello failed to finish when his engine caught fire on Lap 41 while leading in Sepang during the Malaysian Grand Prix on March 17.

And Schumacher finished third aboard F2001 although his car's nose got clipped in the first of the 56 laps ran under scorching heat.

I saw the incident as I was there myself, thanks to Toyota Motor Philippines. Toyota's Raymond Rodriguez and Danny Isla had graciously allowed Star's Brian Afuang, Bulletin's Ding Marcelo and Anjo Perez, Today's Popong Andolong, Motoring Today's Butch Gamboa and myself to gawk endlessly at the mostly red-and-white machine of Toyota's Mika Salo and Allan McNish during the rare look-see at the pit reserved only for Paddock Club members.

The Schumi incident happened when Colombian Juan Pablo Montoya touched Schumacher's car during the jockeying for position right at the first bend just seconds after takeoff. Schumi was the pole sitter, Montoya at second.

Montoya had claimed the speeding Schumi had "understeered," causing his car to touch the front wing of Schumi's Ferrari.

"It was an ordinary thing," said Montoya, a sentiment echoed by Schumi.

Nevertheless, Montoya was slapped a drive-thru penalty at the pit lane where the maximum speed is 80 kph. That cost him precious time as the standard track speed was 200 kph.

* * *

If Ferrari pushes through with the Sunday plan, it should be worth our watch as the 33-year-old Schumi, the German ace chasing a record-equaling fifth Formula 1 title, is driving unchartered machinery. The F2002's debut will be an acid test primarily for the car. Schumi's skills will be showcased once more.

Schumi, seeking a third straight Formula 1 victory, won the Australian Grand Prix on March 3 with his F2001 car. He snatched third in Kuala Lumpur after spectacularly plowing back into a podium finish from 21st following that "touch" with Montoya.

Motoya, 26, finished second to Schumi's younger brother, the 26-year-old Ralf, as BMW Williams scored a rare 1-2 finish at the $80-million, 5-km Sepang Circuit.

As a result, Schumi's lead was cut to two points. He has 14 going to Brazil, with Montoya second with 12 and Ralf third with 10.

That 1-2 finish by Ralf and Montoya pushed BMW Williams atop the Constructors' World Championship standings with 22, a huge 8-point margin over defending champion Ferrari. McLaren-Mercedes is third with four, Jaguar, Renault and Sauber fourth to sixth with three, Minardi seventh with two and debuting Toyota eighth with one.

* * *

As I said, the Formula 1 is a marriage of man and machine. Only the best drivers in the world qualify to be there. Only the best cars finish first.

Mostly, however, the talent and skill of virtually all F1 drivers are almost equal. Usually, the formula of F1 victory boils down to who is driving the best car in the field.

While at this, it is worthy to note that Macky Carapiet of Xtreme Worx (tel. 8531631) has been busying himself gathering support for his F1 Club in the Philippines. Already, he has brought to our living rooms (slightly delayed) the first two Grands Prix on NBN 4 through Mia Concio.

Macky C said Malaysian Alex Yoong, the first non-Japanese Asian to make it to F1, might yet have a fellow Asian "from the Philippines" in the near future should the rise in F1 interest in the country continues to prosper.

This brings me back to sad memories of Jovy Marcelo, who could have been the first Filipino to make it to F1 had he not met that fatal accident in a practice run in the run-up to a US race some years back.

* * *

QUOTE ME. The ride along Romulo Highway from Tarlac to Pangasinan is much smoother than along Edsa from Balintawak to Baclaran.

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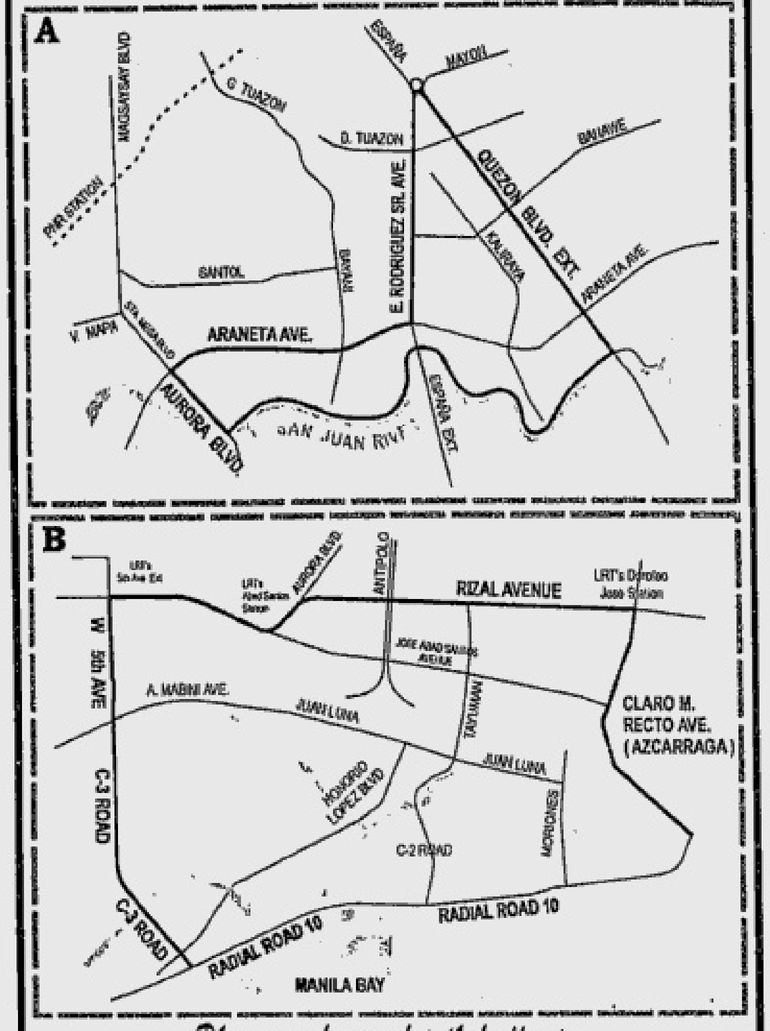

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Notice is given that the estate of the late **TEODORO Y. TOLENTINO, SR** has been settled extrajudicially per Doc 345, Page 1, Book XIV, Series of 2002 of Notary Public El Cid C. Fajardo of Pasig City
(PDI-Mar. 14, 21 & 28, 2002)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **FELICISIMO DAYANAN** and **EPIFANIA DAYANAN** has been extrajudicially settled among heirs as per Doc.97 Page 21 Book No. IV Series of 2002 before Notary Public J.T. PELICANO of Pasig City
PDI-March 21, 28 April 4, 2002

Please take notice that the estate of the late **VIRGINIA MAY T. ALILING** who died on Sept. 26, 2001 was extrajudicially settled by her hairs as per Doc 1793, Page 61, Book X, Series of 2002 of Notary Public Jose P.O. Aliling IV of Makati City.
(PDI-March 21, 28 & April 4, 2002)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given that DON MARIANO TRANS CORP. Plate Nos. PVG 393, 662, 398, 382 NYG 793, 833, 843, 823 PVV 852, 218, 228, 230, 248 PVV 258, 438, 278, 288 TVV 420, PWA 128, 148, 198 PWA 118, 178 TVX 986, 966 TVX 976, 545, 565, TVK 430 PWL 470, PWC 217, 237, 227 PWC 128 NXL 885, 989, 987 NXL 661 PWZ 142 PVY 142 PVF 852
KING OF KINGS TRANS CORP Plate Nos. PYK 713, 733, PYL 353, 343 PYL 313, 393, 303 PYG 755 PYG 835, 840, 830, 810, 780 PYG 815, 820 PYL 413 PYK 403 PYJ 737, 697 PYK 723 PYN 410, 426 PWR 117, 216, 226 PWN 241were lost.
(PDI-March 14, 21&28, 2002)

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PUBLIC NOTICES

PERSONAL

PRAYER TO ST. JOSEPH

Oh, St. Joseph, whose protection is so great, so strong, so prompt before the throne of God. I place in you all my interest and desires. Oh, St. Joseph, do assist me by your powerful intercession, and obtain for me from your divine son all spiritual blessings, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. So that, having engaged here below your heavenly power, I may offer my thanksgiving and homage to the most loving of fathers. Oh, St. Joseph, I never weary contemplating you, and Jesus asleep in your arms; I dare not approach while He reposes near your heart. Press Him in my name and kiss His fine head for me and ask Him to return the Kiss when I draw my dying breath. St. Joseph, Patron of departing souls - Pray for me.

This prayer was found in the fiftieth year of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In 1505 it was sent from the Pope to Emperor Charles when he was going into battle. Whoever shall read this prayer or hear it or keep it about themselves, shall never die a sudden death, or be drowned, nor shall poison take effect on them; neither shall they fall into the hands of the enemy, or shall be burned in any fire or shall be overpowered in battle. Say for nine mornings for anything you may desire. It has never been known to fail so be sure you really want what you ask.

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEART CENTER
East Avenue, Quezon City 100 Philippines
Tel. No. 925-2401

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The Philippine Heart Center (PHC) invites sealed written bids for six (6) months (July-December 2002) contract Pharma Medical/Laboratory and Foodstuffs Supplies.

Only duly accredited bidders/suppliers will be allowed to participate in the bidding. List of the requirements to be submitted:

1. Letter of Intent
2. SEC Registration
3. Business License
4. License to Operate (BFAD)
5. Financial Statement (last 2 years)
6. ITR (last 2 years)
7. DOH Accreditation
8. Location Map of Office
9. List of Clients

All interested bidders/suppliers must submit their accreditation documents on or before **April 15, 2002** at Purchasing Division.

The PHC serves the right to disqualify any prospective bidder/s if found if they have submitted falsified documents and/or information the right to accept or reject any bid, and annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to award of contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder/s.

(Sgd.) **ROMEO J. SANTOS, M.D.**
Chairman, PBAC

(PDI – Mar. 22, 23, 24, 28, 31 & Apr. 1, 2002)

movimondo

MOVIMONDO - Italy is implementing a project funded by the European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) entitled: "Relief and Humanitarian Operations in Support of the Returnees, Displaced by the Insurgency in the Province of Lanao del Norte and Lanao del Sur, Mindanao, the Philippines:"

PROJECT N°ECHO/PHL/210/2001/01001
PROCUREMENT NOTICE MP 1002-2002

INVITATION TO BID FOR
- Agricultural Inputs
- Agricultural Implements

TENDER DOCUMENTS

The tender dossier is available for collection at following mail address:

MOVIMONDO, P.O. Box # 13117
GSIS Post Office,
Carmen 9000 Cagayan de Oro City

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF TENDERS

April 19th, 2002 at 12:00 am. Any tender received after this deadline will not be considered.

TENDER OPENING SESSION

On April 26th, 2002 at 12:00 am at Movimondo Field Office, Poblacion, Bacolod, Lanao del Norte- 9205 Philippines Cell :0916-4399283 / 0917-7416322
E mail :moviphil@yahoo.it
From March 21, 2002.

For purpose of securing a copy of the bidding requirements, please write us at the address: MOVIMONDO Field Office, Poblacion, Bacolod, Lanao del Norte- 9205 Philippines; Email: moviphil@yahoo.it

(Sgd.) **ENRICO CAMPIGLIA**
Project Coordinator

(PDI - March 21, 28, Apr. 4 & 11, 2002)

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811-4370

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528-0213, 527-3342

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635-0219, 635-0220

ANNOUNCEMENT

The **INQUIRER CLASSIFIED ADS** Main and Branch offices will be closed on ***Maundy Thursday*** and ***Good Friday***.

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SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252 4270* 4214* 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252 4284

March 26, 2002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the bidding of the below-listed services;

A. Contracts: **SERVICE MAINTENANCE FOR SUN SERVERS AND RELATED PERIPHERALS**

B. Services to be performed include:
   I. Shall provide twenty-four (24) hours by seven (7) days a weeek on-call service for emergency breakdown support
   II. Shall provide the labor, parts and necessary tools and testing instrument needed to repair the unit
   III. Shall provide software and hardware maintenance and troubleshooting for Operating System and Bundled Software.
   IV. Quarterly preventive maintenance of Sun Servers and Peripherals (1 Lot)
   V. Upgrade of the following servers:
      Domain Name Services (DNS) server with Solaris OS
      Mail server with Solaris OS
      1Gb Memory Upgrade of Spectrum Server

C. Approved Budget Cost: **Php = Twelve Million Eighty Five Pesos (P12,085,000.00)**

D. Application for Eligibility and to Bid is open to all qualified contractors/suppliers. Prospective bidders are required to submit a letter of intent and certified true copy of the following documents:
   1. Article of Incorporation
   2. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration
   3. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (if not Corporation)
   4. Valid Mayor's Permit
   5. VAT Registration
   6. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years (certified true copy in sealed envelope)
   7. Presence of Exclusive/Authorized/Sole Distributorship Agreement from the (OEM) Original Equipment Manufacturer, document duly notarized at the point of origin.
   8. Company PROFILE
   9. List of Products
   10. List of Clients

E. Deadline for submission of Accomplished for Eligiblity to bid: **April 12, 2002, 5:00 p.m.**

F. Time and date of Pre-bid Conference and Submission and Opening of Bids shall be confirmed through Bid Bulletin.

Bid documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractor duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost of bid documents of Two Hundred Pesos (P200.00) only.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the procurement of Supplies & Materials.

SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO A. INOCENTES**
Vice Chairman, BAC

(PDI -- March 28, 31 & April 1, 2002)

SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252 4270* 4214* 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252 4284

March 26, 2002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the bidding of the below-listed services;

A. Contracts: **ONE (1) LOT SECURITY SERVICES CONTRACT AT BTPI, SBFZ**

B. Approved Budget Cost: **Php = Two Million Three Hundred Twenty One Thousand and Three Hundred Eighty Two Pesos (P2,321,382.00)**

C. Application Particulars for Eligibility is open to all qualified Contractors with the following requirements:
   1. Article of Incorporation
   2. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration
   3. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (if not Corporation)
   4. SSS Registration and copy of R5 for the last two (2) years
   5. Certificate of Payment from SSS (latest)
   6. DOLE Registration
   7. Valid Mayor's Permit
   8. VAT Registration
   9. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years (certified true copy in sealed envelope)
   10. Latest Income Tax Return from BIR
   11. License to operate issued by PNP (SUSIA) Camp Crame
   12. Accreditation & Certification from the Philippine Association of Detective & Protective Agency (PADPA)
   13. List of Equipment/ guns/ radios to be used on this particular project
   14. DOTC License for radios
   15. Non-pending case from the Department of Labor & Employment (DOLE)
   16. Required Drug Test for every Security Officers of the Company
   17. Security Bond from the insurance company
   18. Company PROFILE
   19. List of previous & present clients
   20. Proposed Organizational Chart
   21. List of Clients

D. Deadline for submission of Accomplished for Eligibility to bid: **April 12, 2002, 5:00 p.m.**

E. Time and date of Pre-bid Conference and Submission/Opening of Bids shall be confirmed through Bid Bulletin.

Bid documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractor duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost of bid documents of Two Hundred Pesos (P200.00) only.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the procurement of supplies & materials.

SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO A. INOCENTES**
Vice Chairman, BAC

(PDI -- March 28, 31 & April 1, 2002)

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BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252 4270* 4214* 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252 4284

March 26, 2002

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the bidding of the below-listed services;

A. Contracts: **ONE (1) LOT SERVICE MAINTENANCE FOR NETWORK EQUIPMENT.**

B. Services to be performed include:

   Perform on-site complete cleaning, lubrication, adjustment, alignment, inspection and testing of all networking equipment and its accessories on a quarterly and shall provide a comprehensive report of equipment status;

   Repair and/or troubleshoot all malfunctioning units or replace with new parts/ components within 2 hours to minimize downtime. There should be loaner equipment/ units and spare parts situated at the Data Center for emergency cases;

   Provide twenty-four (24) hours by seven (7) days a week including holidays, on-call and phone support for emergency breakdown;

   All replacement and upgrade of the equipment must be of the same brand/product (e.g. Cabletron, Pairgain, 3Com, Network Appliance)

C. Approved Budget Cost: **Php = Five Million Six Hundred Thousand Pesos (P5,600,000.00)**

D. Application Particulars for Eligibility is open to all qualified Contractors with the following requirements:
   1. Article of Incorporation
   2. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration
   3. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (if not Corporation)
   4. Valid Mayor's Permit
   5. VAT Registration
   6. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years (certified true copy in sealed envelope)
   7. Presence of Exclusive/Authorized/Sole Distributorship Agreement from the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM), document duly notarized at the point of origin.
   8. Company PROFILE
   9. List of Products
   10. List of Clients

E. Deadline for submission of Accomplished for Eligibility to bid: **April 12, 2002, 5:00 p.m.**

F. Time and date of Pre-bid Conference and Submission/Opening of Bids shall be confirmed through Bid Bulletin.

Bid documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractor duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost of bid documents of Two Hundred Pesos (P200.00) only.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the procurement of supplies & materials.

SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ANTONIO A. INOCENTES**
Vice Chairman, BAC

(PDI -- March 28, 31 & April 1, 2002)

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID

Date : March 19, 2002
Loan No. 1
Contract No. 1

1. The Government of the Philippines through the Development of Agrarian Reform (DAR) has received a loan from the Asia Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of Agrarian Reform Communities Project (ARCP). It is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the contract for Rural Infrastructure Component for which this invitation to Pre-Qualify and to Bid is issued.
2. The Municipality of Lambayong as implementing partner of the DAR for ARCP, intends to pre-qualify contractors and if pre-qualified, to bid for the rehabilitation and completion of Pidtiquian-Pimbalayan to New Cebu Farm to Market Road.

Minimum Equipment Required:

1 unit Prime Mover	-	Leased/Owned
1 unit Bulldozer	-	Owned
1 unit Road Grader	-	Leased/Owned
5 units Dump Truck	-	Owned
5 units Dump Truck	-	Leased
1 unit Road Roller	-	Leased/Owned
1 unit Concrete Mixer (1 bagger)	-	Owned
1 unit Water Truck	-	Leased/Owned

3. Pre-qualification forms (Pre-C) and bidding documents, may be purchased by interested eligible bidders at the Municipal Engineering Office and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos Only (P2,000.00) for each set beginning April 3, 2002.
4. Submission of application for pre-qualification must be received in sealed envelopes addressed to **The Chairman, PBAC-ARCP, Municipality of Lambayong** not later than **May 3, 2002**.
5. The submission and opening of bids will be on **10:00 AM of May 3, 2002**. No bids will be accepted later than **10:00 AM of May 3, 2002**. Prior to the bidding, a pre-bid Conference will be held at 2:00 PM on April 19, 2002 at the Municipal Hall, Lambayong, Sultan Kudarat. The bids shall be valid for a period of 120 days after bid opening and must be accompanied by a bid security of **Three Hundred Fifty Thousand Pesos Only P350,000.00)** or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency.
6. The PBAC-ARCP reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligations whatsoever to compensate or indemnify to the bidder for any expense or loss that they may incur in the preparation of bid and to accept the bid most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **HON. RAMON M. ABALOS**
Chairman, PBAC-ARCP

(PDI--Mar. 21 & 28, 2002)

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The PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER enjoys the biggest circulation and readership among all the major broadsheets in the country. It has a dominant market share of over 55% according to the 2000 Asia Research Organization (ARO) Tri-Media Study.

MARYLEF "Mahar" P. Delos Reyes, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Mario Delos Reyes, Inquirer employee, graduated Valedictorian at Little People School (LPS) Inc., San Isidro, Bay, Laguna. She also received the Medal of Honor for Leadership given by President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo. Mahar will take Bachelor of Science in Agriculture at the University of the Philippines Los Baños. Present at the Recognition day held on March 21 were (L-R): Dr. Wilbur Ventura Sr., president and administrator of LPS; Fely Delos Reyes; Marylef P. Delos Reyes; Mario Delos Reyes Sr.; Guillerma Ventura, principal; Zenaida Quintos, guidance counsellor; and Nenette Malunay-Diones, class adviser.

The message of lent in Jesuit story and song

PEOPLE often associate Holy Week with masses and services, Visita Iglesia and penitence. Holy Week often brings a somber, even sorrowful mood, that some would like nothing but to simply escape it. And so beaches and resorts welcome those who can afford to retreat in such a fashion, while the rest must be content with staying at home, watching what little TV is available.

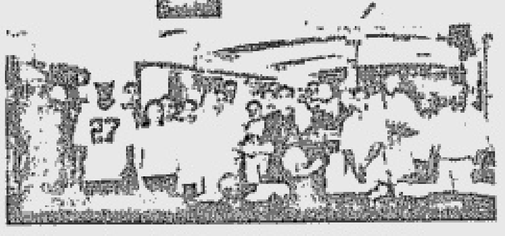
This is, of course, a caricature, but it is not too far from the truth. People experience claustrophobia when it comes to Holy Week; the atmosphere of seriousness is too much for us, and it becomes quite a negative experience. But little do we realize that every week of our lives is Holy Week, in that every week (every day, even), we play out the cycle of suffering, death and resurrection. That is what it means to be Christian, to be Catholic; Christ's story is our story, too.

This Holy Week, Jesuit Communications and PLDT invite everyone to share in different stories—ultimately our stories—as we focus on the lives of those who struggle to be holy.

"May Call Waiting Ka Ba?" looks into the question of vocation. Through interviews and vignettes, these three priests, a brother and a nun, share what it has meant for them to share in Christ's story in their own particular ways. By hearing their words as they seek to answer a call, we may hopefully see that the call is for us, too, as we seek to share in Christ's story. "May Call Waiting Ka Ba?" airs on March 28, Holy Thursday at 9:30 p.m. over GMA 7and on March 30, Black Saturday at 8 p.m. over RPN 9.

"Message Sent" explores the nature of mission. A Jesuit priest sent to Nigeria, a contemplative nun, a priest whose parish is a mountain and a Little Brother of Jesus share the stories of their missions. As they discover their talents and faults, their strengths and weaknesses as they follow the call of Christ, these missionaries also unfold the stories of their lives. Their stories are our stories as well, as we go about our own missions in concrete response to Christ's call. "Message Sent" airs on March 29, Good Friday at 9 p.m. over GMA 7and on March 30 at 8:30 p.m. over RPN 9.

"Your Dwelling Place" is another sort of story, a story told in song. Inspired by a healing concert of the same title that took place early this year, "Your Dwelling Place" invites viewers to join in a journey of song with Himig Heswita and Friends. This special musical presentation features the works of renowned Jesuit composers such as Arnel Aquino, Manoling Francisco, Eduardo Hontiveros and Nemesio Que, as well as works by other lay composers. Ordered around the four weeks of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius, "Your Dwelling Place" seeks to bring the healing that is at the heart of Holy Week. it airs on March 29 at 8 p.m. over GMA 7



NIKE-PUREFOODS TEAMUP

Nike, the company that brings innovation and inspiration to every athlete in the world, has once again teamed up with local pro team Purefoods TJ Hotdogs for this year's basketball season. Shown is the Purefoods team together with team manager Rene Pardo, Nike Philippines sports marketing manager Auty Villarama and Nike Philippines marketing coordinator Rely SanAgustin.

KELLER INSPECTS LIPA GOLF COURSE

Mike Keller, VP for Asian operations for Robert Trent Jones II Design Group, was in town for an ocular inspection of Summit Point Golf and Country Club, the latest golf course in Lipa City, Batangas. Shown from left are Conrad C. Leviste, chair of Summit Point Realty and Development Corp., Lauro S. Leviste II, SPRDC president, Keller, Mario Lopez, manager of Turf Company, and Mike Poobalan, Summit Point golf shaper.

Biz Clips

Lunch treats at Tropical Forest

GO FOR guilt-free food at lunch, and when you have the energy, groove it up at the bayside party by nightfall. Amazing, but Tropical Forest Café & Grill offers you a unique treat this March as its casual dining section offersa trimmed but filling lunch—soup and salad buffet for only P250 per person. Good for weight watchers, choose from an extensive choice of salad and bread, and a wide variety of soup. Price is inclusive of one round of drink. Tropical Café & Grill is located at TM Kalaw corner Parade Streets, Ermita, Manila. For inquiries and reservations, call 400-7438 to 39.

ASLP's 3-day workshop

THE ASSOCIATION of Special Libraries of the Philippines (ASLP) will hold a 3-day seminar workshop on "Strengthening Weak Links in Library Management" to be held at Jennifer's Garden, J. Estevez Street, Legaspi City from April 3 to 5. For further inquiries, call Cora Garcia at 524-9217, fax 523-1252; Cecilia Guevarra at 734-7371, fax 735-3684; Mila Ong at telefax 521-7223.

CONTRACT SIGNING
PLDT

PLDT-AXA LIFE AGREEMENT

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company recently inked an agreement with Philippine AXA Life to obtain the group hospitalization insurance coverage for dependents of its 13,000 employees, effective February this year. Shown signing the contract are (seated, from left) Victor P. Quisumbing, Philippine AXA Life president and CEO; Emiliano R. Tanchico, first vice president and head of human resources of PLDT; and Enrique G. dela Cruz, Philippine AXA Life senior executive vice president and chief marketing officer. Also shown are (standing, from left) Noemisio Molina, executive vice president and chief operating officer, Gotuaco Del Rosario and Associates Inc.; George C. Mina, Philippine AXA Life vice president for customer service; Dionisio Buhay, PLDT Center head, payroll benefits; and Precy G. Banes, vice president for employee benefits, Gotuaco Del Rosario and Associates.

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*"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live,
even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die."* John 11:25-26

JUANITA TAN LIYAO

The loving wife of the late

WILLIAM LIYAO

Has peacefully joined her Creator on March 27, 2002 at the age of 78.

Her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren will miss her dearly.

PEARL and **DR. JESUS K. TAN (M.D., F.A.C.S.)**
Dr. Jesse William Tan (M.D.), Atty. Audrey Cassandra Tan-Fong & Atty. Kenneth Fong

TITA ROSE and **JOSE S. TAN**
Anna Marie & Cary Go, Ryan Joshua Go, Yohann Brandon Go; Frederick & Clarence Y. Tan,
Erika Clare Tan; Gilbert & Sandra C. Tan, Patrisha Denise Tan; Joelyrose Tan;
Antonio & Kristine C. Tan, Kyle Miguel Tan

LINDA and **TEDDY T. ORTIGA**
Alexis Ortiga, John Antonio Ortiga, Vito Antonio Ortiga

TONY and TERESA L. LIYAO

Her remains lie in state at the Mt. Carmel Chapel, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish, Broadway, New Manila, Quezon City.

Interment will be on March 31, 2002 at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque after the 8:30 AM Mass at the Mt. Carmel Chapel, Quezon City.

We request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

***"I am the Resurrection and the Life,
he who believes in Me will live even though he dies
and whoever believes in Me will never die."***
John 11:25-26

Noli Samonte Dacer

His loving wife **MILAGROS**; children **ABSY, ABE & JOYCE** and **KAYE**; grandchildren **IYAH, JOREL** and **JOBER** mourn his passing away but celebrate his eternal rest with our Creator.

His remains lie in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, March 30, 2002 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City at 9:00 AM.

ATTY. ENRIQUE HR ABILA

Member: Philippine Veterans Legion (PVL)

HAS BEEN CALLED HOME BY GOD OUR FATHER
on March 27, 2002 after receiving the Last Rites of the Catholic Church.

He will be lovingly missed by his wife, **BENILDA PELAYO ABILA,**
Children with **RAYMUNDA GUIDOTE ABILA** (†)
PICHINA & **JACOB PEÑA** and **ENRIQUE, JR.**
son **NIKO PELAYO ABILA**
Grandchildren **J. ARMAND** & **CECILLE, JEREMY, JOHN** and **MA. REGINA PEÑA, ERIC, TZADDI, AURIN, TRIXIE, NONA** and **MUNDELIEA ABILA** and
Greatgrandson **ENZO PEÑA.**

The body now lies in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels and will be cremated after the 10:00 AM Funeral Mass on Tuesday, April 2, 2002.

Our Dear Daddy

RAMON G. BALATBAT

*has peacefully joined our Creator
on the 26th of March 2002 at the age of 70.*

Together with our loving Mommy, **Nora,** we his children **Rino & Monette, Ariel & Gemma,** and **Michelle & Beng**; his grandchildren **Adgie, Nikki, Chiya, Leira, Chimce** and **Mindy**; his brothers and sisters, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains now lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapels, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Sunday, 31st of March 2002 at the Eternal Gardens.

FRANCISCA M. DONATO

*Died in the Grace of our Lord
on March 21, 2002 at the age of 56
in Las Vegas, Nevada, U.S.A.*

Her remains will be flown to Manila on March 30 and will lie in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe.

Her remains will be transferred to Victoria, Tarlac on April 1, for interment (to be announced later)

DIVINIA A. FABROS

of Quezon City

*Passed away on March 26, 2002
at the age of 59.*

Her bereaved sisters **Gracia Gueco, Gloria Tesoro, Dulce Morales** and **Virginia Salas**; her nieces, nephews and other relatives request your prayers for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at the La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on Good Friday, March 29, 2002 after the 1:30 PM blessings at La Funeraria Paz.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord." Matthew 10:38

**"For God so loved
the world,
that He gave
His only
begotten Son,
that whoever
believes in Him
shall not perish
but have
everlasting life."**
John 3:16

ROSARIO GIJAL CLAMOR

"Nanay Chayong"

of Balanga, Bataan and Gigaquit, Surigao Del Norte

Peacefully joined her Creator on March 25, 2002 at the age of 82.

She is survived by her children **Victor**, **Rafael** and **Jesse**; daughters-in-law **Tita**, **Nell Rose** and **Rina**; sister **Priscila Gijal Esperon**; grandchildren, nephews and nieces.

Her remains lie in state at the residence of **Engr. Victor Clamor**, Rimaville Subdivision, Ibayo, Balanga, Bataan. Memorial service will be held on Saturday, March 30, 2002 at 2:00 PM at the Capitol United Methodist Church, Balanga, Bataan.

Interment will follow immediately at the Eternal Shrine Memorial Park.

(In lieu of flowers, the family will appreciate donations to the building fund of Capitol United Methodist Church, Balanga, Bataan.)

"My soul finds rest in God alone
from Sun comes my salvation." Psalm 62:2

Our dearly beloved

SANTIAGO P. ALVAREZ

of Kabankalan, Negros Occidental and St. Louis, Missouri, USA
1920 - 2002

has serenely joined the Lord in His kingdom on March 27, 2002 at the age of 81.

His bereaved wife LULU RUBIN, children SONNY & MILETTE LOCSIN, NENA & BILL BUCHANA, LOTTIE & BOYING NIERRAS, INEZ & TITO POLOTAN, LYN & JIMBO REYNOSO & DINGDONG & EDDIE LIWANAG, grandchildren TRIXIE PICCINA, JACQUI, LYNDEE & CARLO FAVIS, KATHY, PIA, JOEY, MARI, MICO, LOUIE, BEA, CARLO, ANNA, GABBY, VINO, NICOLE, MONICA, MAIA, & CELINE, great grandchildren SANTINO and NATALIA, sisters, sisters-in-law, nephews and nieces request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the St. Alphonsus Liguori Parish Center, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Interment will be on Wednesday, April 3, 2002 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque after the 3:00 PM Mass.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Servants of the Good Shepherd and the Buklod ng Pag-ibig Community will be greatly appreciated.

Our Beloved "Tatang", Teacher and Friend

VIRGILIO "Viliong" MACABULOS ADRIANO

(July 31, 1913 - March 26, 2002)

Has joined our equally beloved **"Inang" Francesca T. Adriano**; his brother **Israel**; and sisters **Virginia (Lapid)**, **Elena (Gozo)** and **Estrella (Tiamson)**, in the bosom of our Lord on Holy Tuesday, March 26, 2002.

His remains lie in state at the Santo Cristo Chapel in Guagua, Pampanga. Funeral arrangements will take place at the Guagua Catholic Cemetery on Easter Sunday, March 31, 2002, after the 2:00 PM Holy Mass.

May we his children **Edgardo, Israel, Celia, Virginia (Lagman), Aida (Gabarda), Virgilio Jr., Mario** and **Raymundo ADRIANO**; our spouses and our own children, cousins and other relatives, request the pious reader to join us in prayers for his eternal rest.

"Eternal rest grant unto him O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him."

"The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
He makes me lie down on green pastures.
He leads me beside salt waters. He restores my soul."
Psalm 23:1,2

JOSE A. MADULID, SR.

Founder of Hi-Grade Feeds Corporation

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 26, 2002 at the age of 91.

His loving family: wife **AURELIA** (†); children **TONY** and **PRECIE Roque**, **OSCAR** and **TESSIE**, **JAIME** and **MARINA**, **SR. NORA, FMM** (†), **PEPITO** (†) and **TESS**, **MIKE** and **LILIA Cardino**, **EFREN** and **ERMI**, **CELSO** and **CECILLE**; grandchildren **Rossan**, **Roel** and **Cherry**, **Jerry** and **Lisa**, **Aris** and **Cathy**, **Ria**, **Jessie** and **Joy**, **Jun**, **Lito** and **Raquel**, **Ariel** and **Maritess**, **Joel**, **Jennifer**, **Jacqueline**, **Jose III** and **Joan**, **Janice**, **JP** and **Melanie**, **Tenten** and **Nia**, **Rina**, **Cheska**, **Abigail**, **Michael** and **Jinggay**, **Andrew**, **Rommel**, **Lea**, **Arlene** and **Christian**; great grandchildren, brothers and sisters, and friends request prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Arlington Memorial Chapel, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Quezon City on Saturday, March 30, 2002 after the 2:30 p.m. services at Arlington Memorial Chapel.

Our Dearly Beloved

CHARLES TANG LEE

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 26, 2002 at the age of 79.

His loving wife **Regina**; children **Jojo & Marie**, **Patrick & Nanette**, **Christopher & Ghin Eng**, **Anne Marie & Henry**, **Timothy & Gina**, **Benilda**; his brothers and sisters, grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the Shrine of the Divine Child, La Salle Green Hills, San Juan, Metro Manila.

Cremation will be on Sunday, March 31, 2002 at Funeraria Paz Crematorium after the 7:30 a.m. Holy Mass at the Shrine of the Divine Child.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

INQUIRER OBITUARIES

DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNIVERSARY REQUIEMS FREE OBIT DESIGN

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Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street, Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu
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Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City; Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City
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79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City; Tel. (074) 443-3337
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Tels. 941-3196 to 98; 941-3676; Telefax 941-3577
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OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS: ❶ Copy of Death Certificate ❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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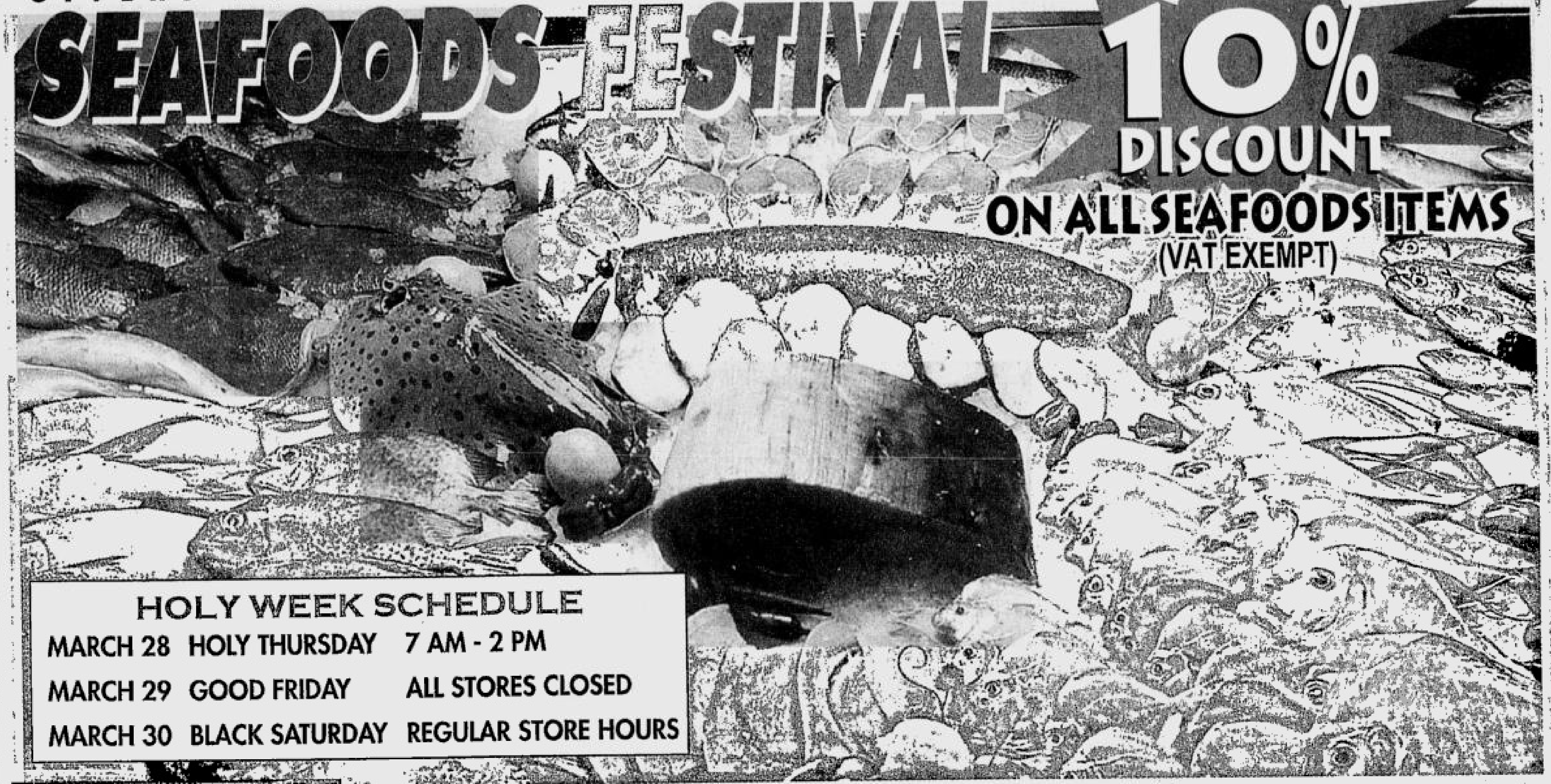

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HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

MARCH 28	HOLY THURSDAY	7 AM - 2 PM
MARCH 29	GOOD FRIDAY	ALL STORES CLOSED
MARCH 30	BLACK SATURDAY	REGULAR STORE HOURS

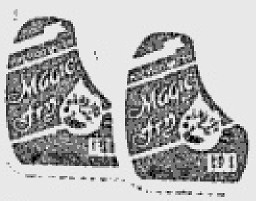
GUARANTEED FRESH

BOUNTY FRESH
Fresh Whole Chicken
VAT EXEMPT P59 per kilo

CARNATION
Condensada
301 mL. x 12
VAT INCLUSIVE P282 per pack
P23.50 per can

DIAMOND
Dinorado Rice
25 Kgs,
VAT EXEMPT P479
P19.16 per kilo

MAGIC FRY
Vegetable Oil
PET 3.2 Kgs.
VAT INCLUSIVE P117



NESCAFE Classic
Refill Pack, 25 G. x 60
VAT INCLUSIVE P727 per pack
P12.12 per 25 G.

PLUS Juice
Orange, Guyabano
Calamansi, Grape, Apple
Strawberry, Pineapple
250 mL. x 10
VAT INCLUSIVE P38.75 per pack
P3.88 per piece

STIK-O
Waferstick
Chocolate
850 G.
VAT INCLUSIVE P74

DOWNY
Fabric Conditioners
Sunrise, Pure Fresh,
Cologne, 22 mL. x 48
VAT INCLUSIVE P157.50
P3.28 per sachet

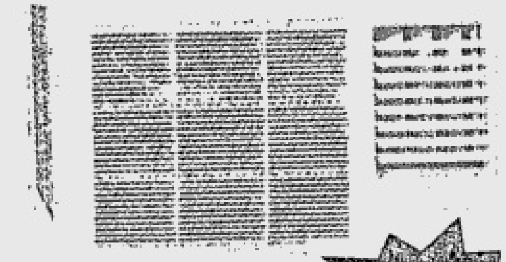
CHEAPER BY THE CASE

2.1% SAVINGS

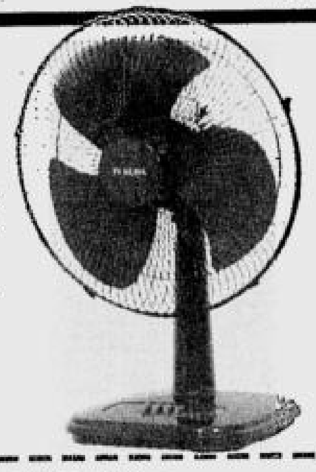
ALASKA
Powdered Filled Milk
180 G.
VAT INCLUSIVE P1,639 per box, 60's
P27.32 per 180 G.
VAT INCLUSIVE P139.50 per 5's
P27.90 per 180 G.

2% SAVINGS

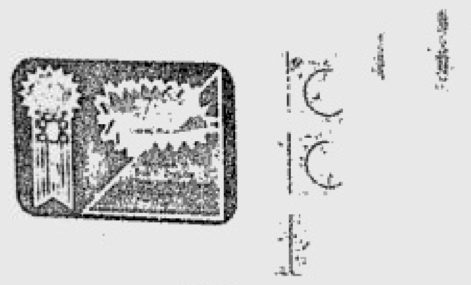
NARCISSUS
Button Mushrooms
400 G.
VAT INCLUSIVE P543 per box, 24's
P22.63 per can
VAT INCLUSIVE P138.50 per 6's
P23.08 per can



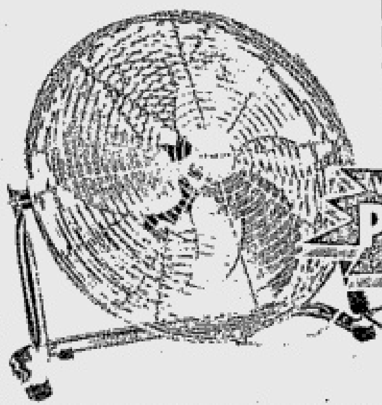
FEDDERS
Room Airconditioner
1 HP, IFY109N7A
VAT INCLUSIVE P11,480



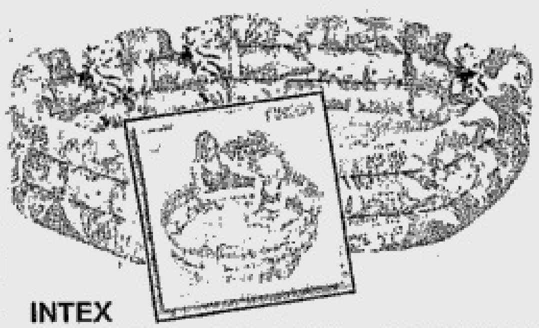
FUKUDA
Desk Fan 16"
Plastic Fan Blade
220V/AC
VAT INCLUSIVE P549



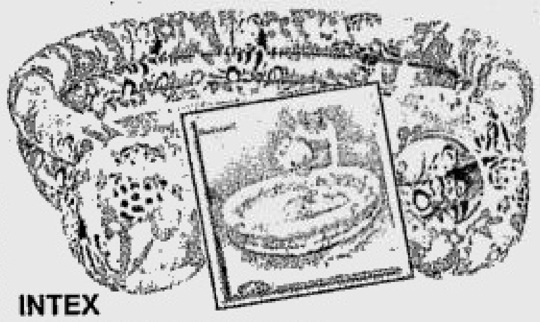
AMERICAN HOMES
Microwave Oven
.6 Cu. Ft. Rotary Control
220 Volts, AM-17M6
VAT INCLUSIVE P2,495



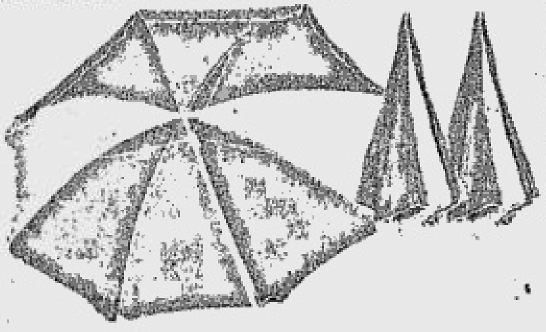
FUKUDA
Industrial Ground Fan 18"
FIGO18/G457
VAT INCLUSIVE P999



INTEX
Jungle 3-Ring Fun Pool
Size 45" x 10" (114cm x 25 cm)
Capacity 48 Gallon, #59419
VAT INCLUSIVE P249



INTEX
Jungle Babies Pool Set
Includes Pool w/
Matching Beach Ball 20" (51 cm)
& Swim Ring
VAT INCLUSIVE P429



NB
Beach Umbrella
80" Diameter
VAT INCLUSIVE P249

Monoblock
Table Square
36" x 36" plus 4 stools
Colors: Marble White, Beige
VAT INCLUSIVE P599

ALLOY RIM
21 SPEED
Size 26

NB
Mountain Bike
VAT INCLUSIVE P1,899

NB
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VAT INCLUSIVE P995

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Reclining
VAT INCLUSIVE P1,295

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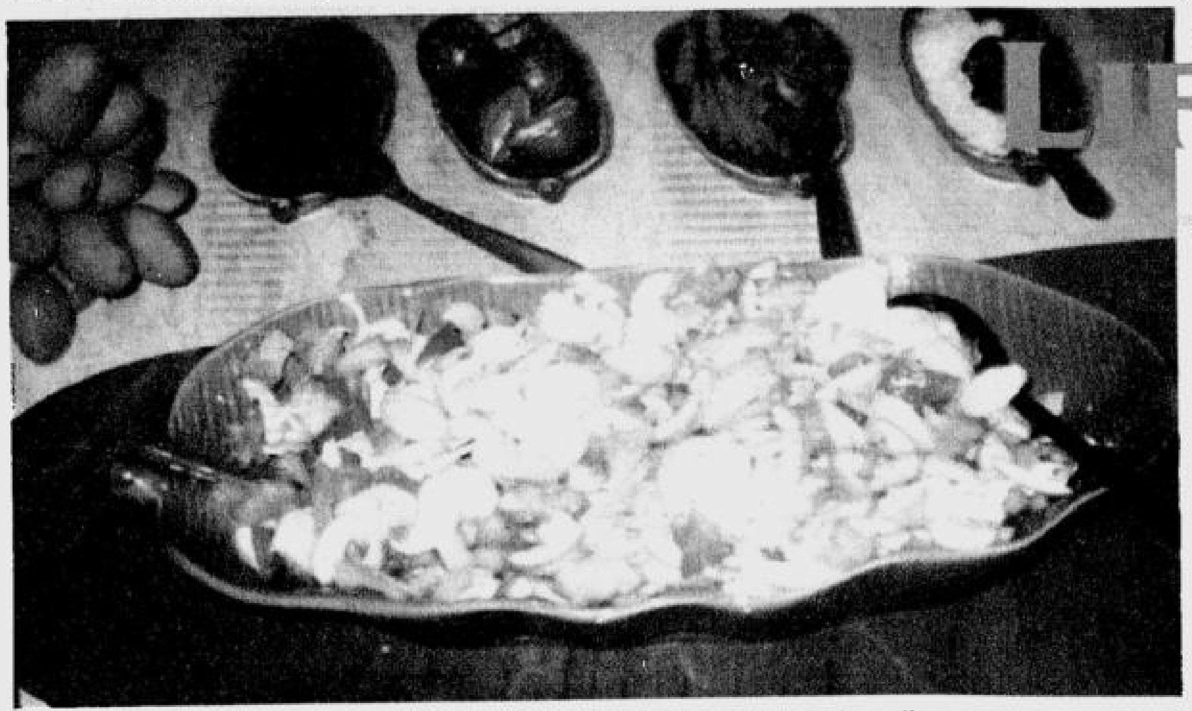
Tastes



BETH Romualdez's *paho* salad with tomatoes, scallions, young garlic and condiments

Filo Batungbacal and her son Rico refuse to export their harvest because 'Filipinos have first rights to their own best fruit'

MANGO sweet in banana leaves, Okinawa style

Mangoes and our summer of sweet content

IN GOOD TASTE

Doreen G. Fernandez

THE SPANISH friars agreed: "The fruit... is one of the most delicate to be found in all the world, both because of its sweetness and its aromatic smell," wrote Juan J. Delgado, S.J. in 1892; and "... it is the most sensuous fruit there is," wrote Juan Francisco de San Antonio in 1738.

So do the folk who traded riddles: "*Hitsurang puso/Kulay balat-saging/Masarap ang samyo/Masarap kung kanin*"; as did the *zarzuela* writer Precioso Palma in "Paglipas ng Dilim" (1920): "*Anong sarap, inyong tikman/ang naritong manggang hilaw.../kapag inyong masarapan/huy! nakakatulo ng laway.*"

We ordinary folk who do not write or document but just enjoy the fruit (Family Anacardiaceae, *Mangifera indica* Linn.), give thanks that the mango, "already under cultivation before history began," found its way from Persia, Africa, Brazil, the West Indies, India (where it has been cultivated since 2000 B.C. or earlier), perhaps Macau, to the Philippines, and here took root, enjoyed the soil and climate, and grew to this marvelous sweetness.

Think of it ripe, at just the right firm, golden stage. Peel the skin off the whole fruit, or cut it into *pisngi* (cheeks)—and enjoy its sweet sensuousness. Take it with *suman* (in Antipolo perhaps, in May); or, as some children do, with milk and sugar. Or even with rice. Eat it at riverside, so that the juices can drip into the water.

My late husband Wili, interior designer and gourmet, was spoiled about mangoes. He would only eat Betagro mangoes grown by his best friend, the late Guillermo (Moy) Batungbacal, on their Zambales farm. Moy had planted the trees himself with great foresight. Now Moy's son Rico nurtures and harvests them, then turns the fruit over to Moy's widow Filo, who personally sorts and weighs them, and accepts orders for them. She refuses to export their mangoes, because "Filipinos have first rights to their own best fruit."

Golden harvest

Our mango year officially begins now, because in early April, the Batungbacal mangoes will be harvested on Easter Sunday and will come to town on April 1 in green-gold glory. The harvest peaks in May, and thus will be available till early June.

Rico, by the way, also uses the mango lands to grow luscious giant watermelons, yellow and red of flesh, seeded and seedless. They will be available in May. (For orders, call Filo at 714-7935/716-6178; Grace in Pandacan at 563-9280; Grace Cobankiat in White Plains/Xavierville at 920-7192/892-9515; Gretchen Consunji in Greenhills, 722-2264; Alice Yao in Makati at 851-1459; Corazon Querubin at [0917]786-0240, 873-1255; and Curing Tablante in Alabang at 642-6837/873-1255.)

Think of the mangoes green, too: in long thick slices, to dip in *bagoong*, or peeled like flowers by itinerant vendors (their plastic-wrapped hands never touch the flesh of the fruit), and offered with *bagoong*. Or as a salad or relish with tomatoes, onions and *bagoong*, to serve with *inihaw na dalag*, or with any fried fish. Or as souring for *sinigang*.

And think of the juices: from ripe mangoes, from green, perhaps honey-sweetened. Think, too, of the sprouts or tendrils, *putat ng mangga*, made into a salad.

Other guises

Think of the other guises under which mangoes are enjoyed: dried as a snack, sweetened into jam, spiced up as chutney. And now that contemporary chefs have adopted it, it is variously served with lobster, shrimps, fish, duck or roast chicken, in salsas, crêpes, mousses, flans, crème brûlée, cheesecakes, tortes and pies. And in ice cream, of course. Its mellifluousness lends itself to blending with savories and sweets.

Let us not forget, either, the *paho/pajo* (*Mangifera altissimo Blanco*), the tiny mangoes that grow in clusters like long bunches of loose grapes. They are mangoes, too, but not a footnote to the famous one. For one thing, *paho* has a slew of native names—*pahukutan, pangi, malapaho, bunutan, popouan, pangamangaon*—and no English name, suggesting that it is a native. It is available during a short season: March to May.

MANGOES/ pC3

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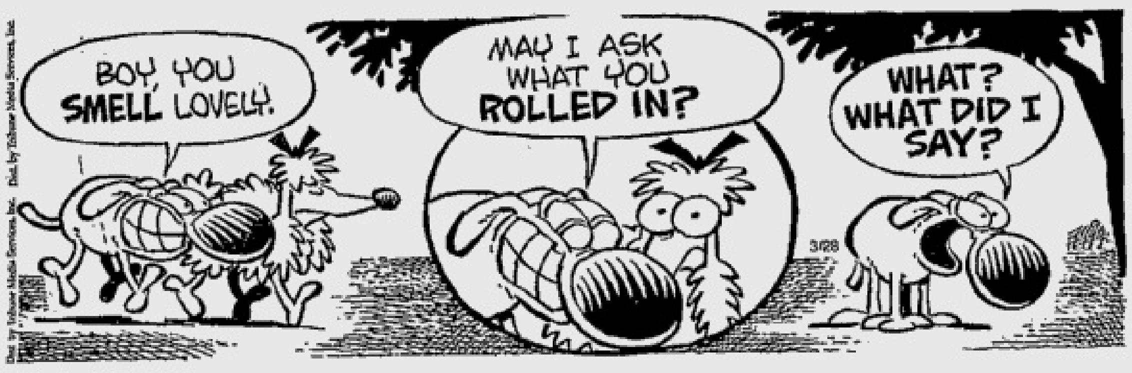
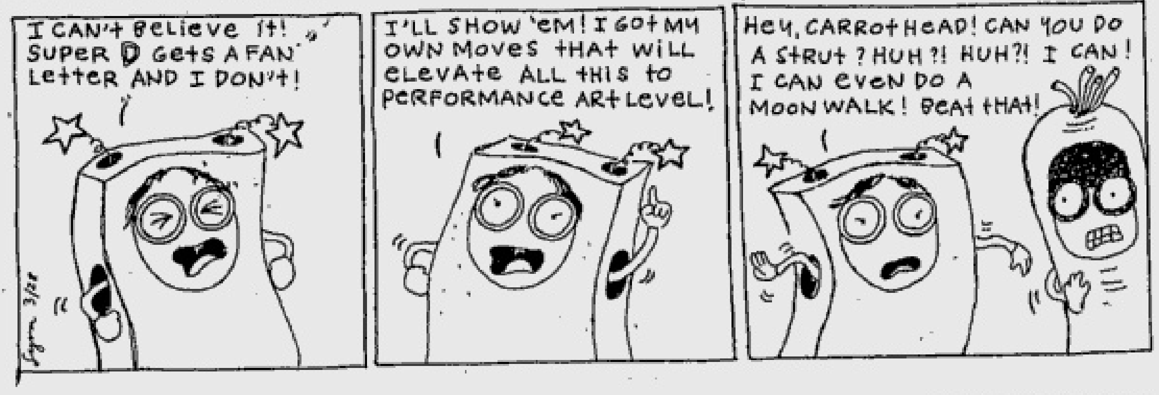
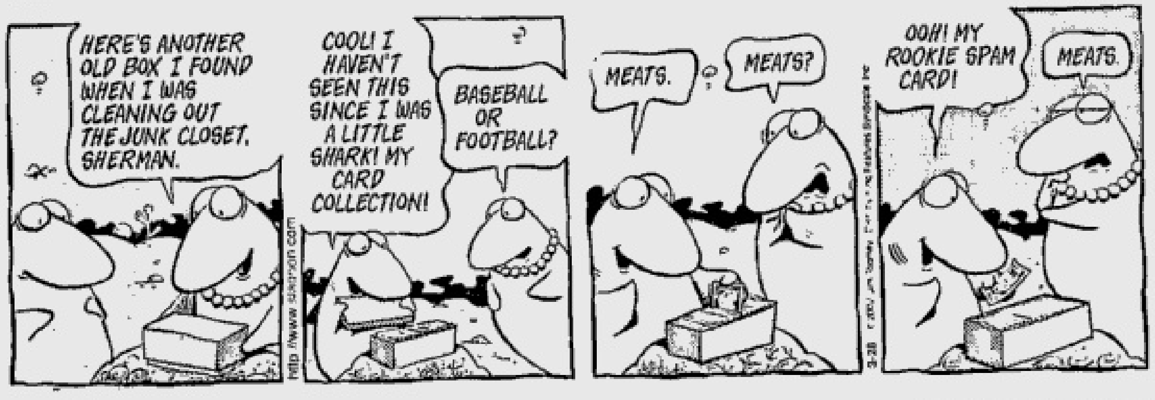
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS


BOY, YOU SMELL LOVELY.
MAY I ASK WHAT YOU ROLLED IN?
WHAT? WHAT DID I SAY?
3/28

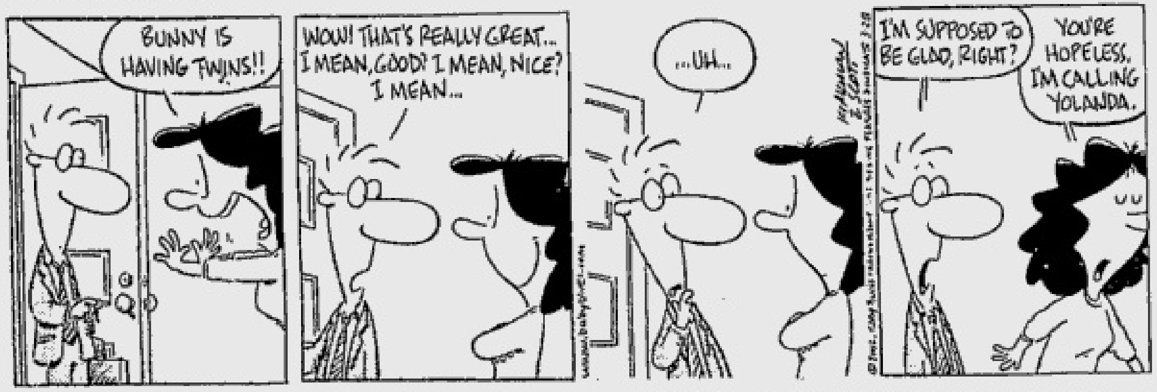
ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! SUPER D GETS A FAN LETTER AND I DON'T!
I'LL SHOW 'EM! I GOT MY OWN MOVES THAT WILL ELEVATE ALL THIS TO PERFORMANCE ART LEVEL!
HEY, CARROTHEAD! CAN YOU DO A STRUT? HUH?! HUH?! I CAN! I CAN EVEN DO A MOONWALK! BEAT THAT!

SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


HERE'S ANOTHER OLD BOX I FOUND WHEN I WAS CLEANING OUT THE JUNK CLOSET, SHERMAN.
COOL! I HAVEN'T SEEN THIS SINCE I WAS A LITTLE SHARK! MY CARD COLLECTION!
BASEBALL OR FOOTBALL?
MEATS.
MEATS?
OOH! MY ROOKIE SPAM CARD!
MEATS.
http://www.slagoon.com
3-28

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


BUNNY IS HAVING TWINS!!
WOW! THAT'S REALLY GREAT... I MEAN, GOOD? I MEAN, NICE? I MEAN...
...UH...
I'M SUPPOSED TO BE GLAD, RIGHT?
YOU'RE HOPELESS. I'M CALLING YOLANDA.
www.babyblues.com

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Dianne Wiest, Reba McEntire, Ken Howard, Frank Murkowski

Happy Birthday: Your intuitive ideas will lead you in new directions. You will be nervous and restless if you don't find something to do that sparks your intellectual curiosity. You will not be willing to listen to others but instead will want to figure things out for yourself this year. Travel will be entertaining. Your numbers are 1, 23, 27, 34, 42, 46

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Let your Aries nature jump-start your day. You'll be able to manipulate situations and get your own way if you push your ideas with finesse.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): It's time to secure your financial situation by making yourself indispensable in the workforce. You've been wavering too long. The time for change is now.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Don't let minor little setbacks get you down. You have plenty to offer and if one person doesn't appreciate you another one will.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): You may feel like making alterations to your home but think again. You are likely to overspend on something that you don't really need. If you are prudent now you will have less to worry about later on.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Friends will be there for you if you need them. Your amusing way of dealing with life's little situations will bring you added popularity. If you have time to take a pleasure trip, do so.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Put your mind to work and don't be afraid to follow the road less traveled. Your ingenuity coupled with your practicality will result in something very worthwhile.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Don't be too quick to let everyone know what you're up to. Keeping an air of mystery about yourself will bring you far more attention. A new philosophy may be presented to you but that doesn't mean you have to follow it.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Think before you find yourself in a place that can lead to trouble. You should focus on making money and worthwhile investments and leave secret activities alone.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Participation in organizations will lead to romantic encounters or new business partnerships. Use your ability to persuade others of your belief in a worthy cause.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Don't overspend or you will appear to be a spendthrift in the eyes of someone who could make a difference to your career. Any thoughts of making costly changes to your home should be put on hold. Put your cash into a retirement fund.

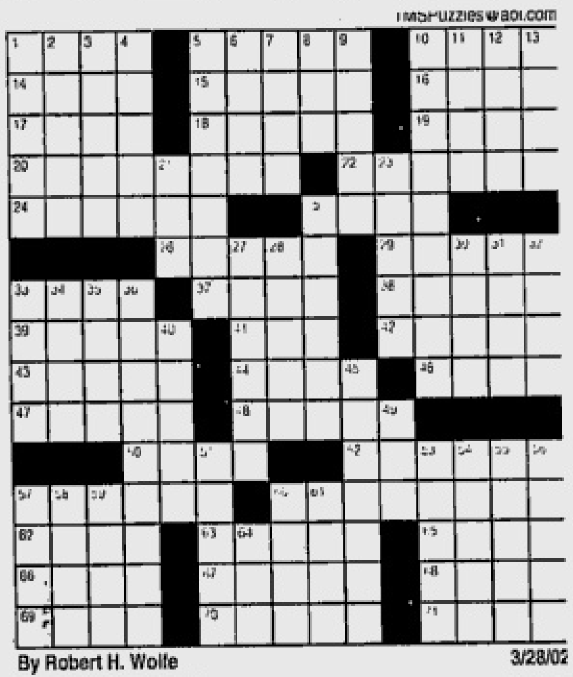
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): You will be entertaining, engaging and very hard to resist today. Opportunities to meet new people will lead to a lucrative business opportunity. It's time to lose your inhibitions and take part in new endeavors.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Put some effort into your living quarters. You should try to make yourself more comfortable. Don't just sit there wishing you had done things to change your life—take action.

Birthday Baby: You will have lots of wonderful, creative ideas and will be terrific at initiating them. You are a doer and you will never be content sitting on the sidelines.

DAILY CROSSWORD

tmsPuzzles@aol.com



By Robert H. Wolfe
North Woodmere, NY

3/28/02

ACROSS

1 First word, often
5 Silvery fish
10 Shawl or cloak
14 Yikes!
15 Singer Tucker
16 Sharpen
17 Ms. Bombeck
18 Sprites
19 Bit
20 Golf foursome in Boston?
22 Throat guardian
24 Finalize
25 Ballesteros of golf
26 Mutt
29 Thrill
33 Part of U.A.E.
37 Writer Paretsky
38 Strictness
39 Director Malle
41 Old salt
42 Winter Palace autocrats
43 Overnight stopover
44 Writer Bagnold
46 Poplar or palm
47 Mall unit
48 Send to another doctor, perhaps
50 Roses' places
52 Goes by
57 Half
60 Pub in a London hospital?
62 Adored one
63 Rustler's rope
65 Bart Simpson's sister
66 Chickens and turkeys
67 Put to use
68 List particular
69 Noisy fight
70 Sensory organs
71 Scout units

DOWN

1 Convenes
2 Be as one
3 "The Cryptogram" playwright
4 Conform
5 Music systems
6 Brewer's grain
7 Green state?
8 Potash
9 Discrimination
10 Drinker's inventory of complaints?
11 Aussie hoppers
12 Against
13 Ring
21 Swiss peak
23 Open
25 Omar of "Funny Girl"
27 Horse operas
28 Machine with a movable boom
30 Culture base
31 Ripped
32 Gaelic tongue
33 Money for mendicants
34 Origin
35 Crat or mat lead-in
36 Protuberance on a catafalque?
40 Icy rain
45 Puts in positions
49 Good cheer
51 Welsh poet Thomas
53 Unbroken
54 Connecting rooms
55 Ruhr city
56 Clothes lines?
57 Offend
58 Bouquet
59 Hawkeye State
60 Egyptian cobras
61 Small landmass
64 Mil. address

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

K	I	T	H	■	O	W	E	D	■	E	L	L	E	N
A	S	I	A	■	P	O	L	O	■	L	E	A	V	E
P	L	A	N	E	T	O	F	T	H	E	A	P	E	S
P	A	R	K	A	S	■	■	T	U	V	■	S	S	S
A	M	A	S	S	■	T	H	E	T	A	S	■	■	■
■	■	■	■	T	R	I	A	D	■	T	U	L	I	P
E	S	S	E	■	E	L	Y	■	P	O	M	A	D	E
M	O	O	N	O	V	E	R	P	A	R	A	D	O	R
U	R	A	N	U	S	■	I	A	N	■	C	E	L	T
S	T	R	U	T	■	I	D	L	E	D	■	■	■	■
■	■	■	I	B	I	D	E	M	■	E	M	E	N	D
A	S	H	■	O	N	E	■	■	B	E	A	N	I	E
T	H	E	S	U	N	A	L	S	O	R	I	S	E	S
K	A	R	E	N	■	L	I	O	N	■	D	U	C	K
A	H	E	A	D	■	S	E	N	D	■	S	E	E	S

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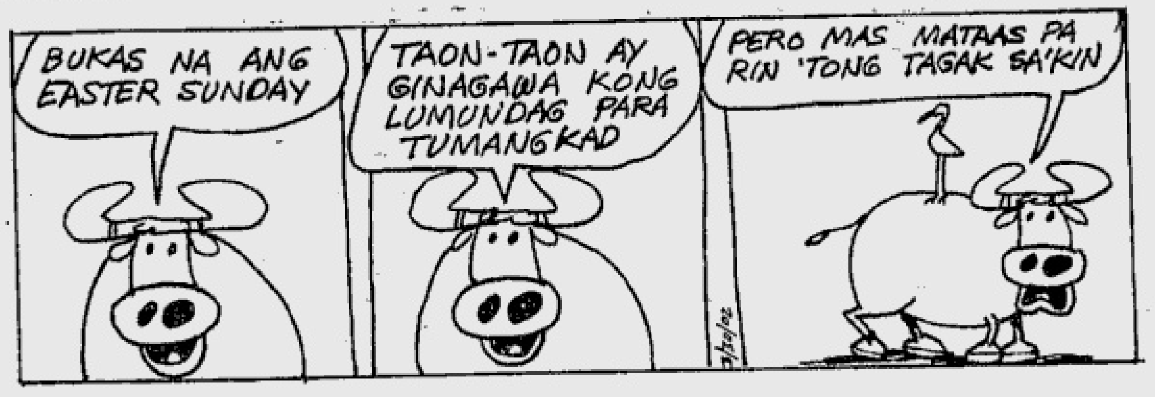
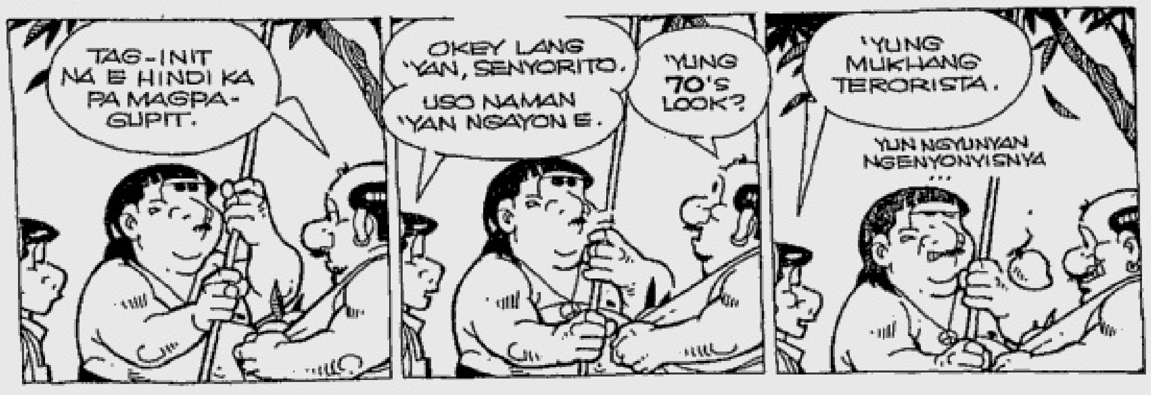
3/28/02

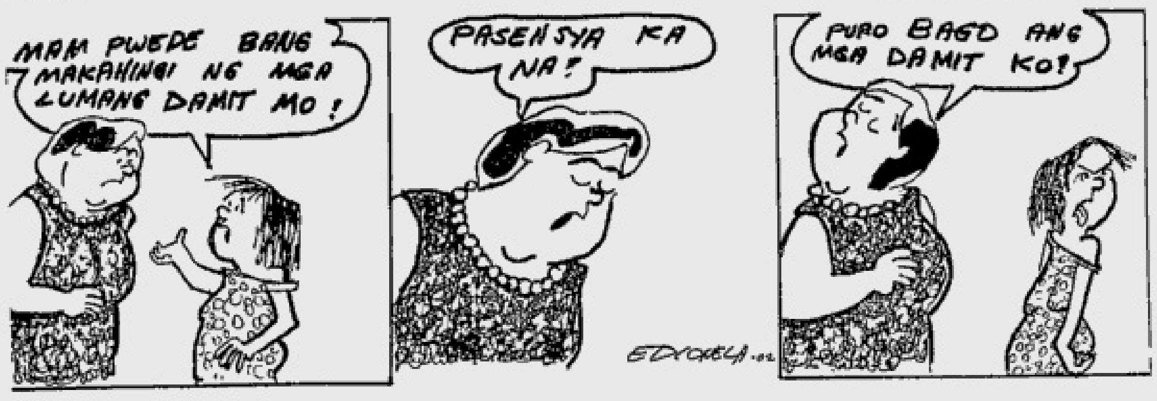
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


BUKAS NA ANG EASTER SUNDAY
TAON-TAON AY GINAGAWA KONG LUMUNDAG PARA TUMANGKAD
PERO MAS MATAAS PA RIN 'TONG TAGAK SA'KIN

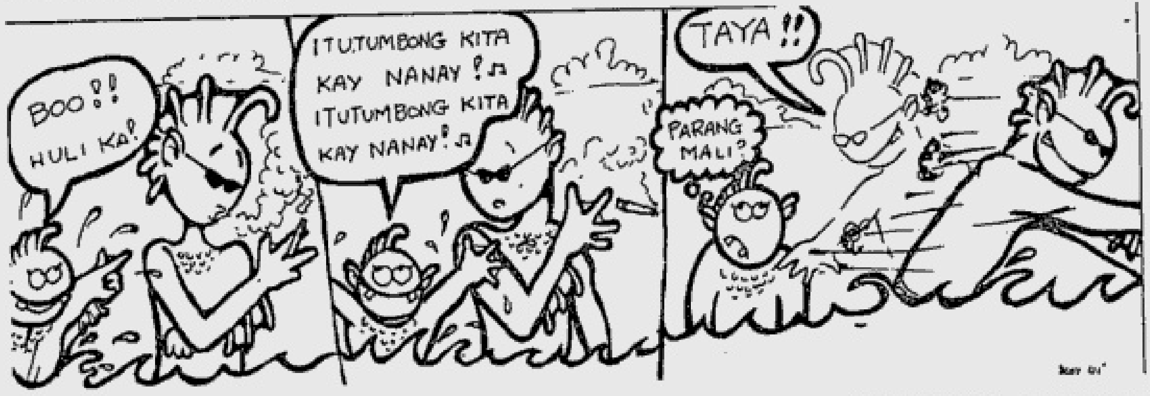
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


TAG-INIT NA E HINDI KA PA MAGPA-GUPIT.
OKEY LANG 'YAN, SENYORITO. USO NAMAN 'YAN NGAYON E.
'YUNG 70'S LOOK?
'YUNG MUKHANG TERORISTA.
YUN NGYUNYAN NGENYONYISNYA ...

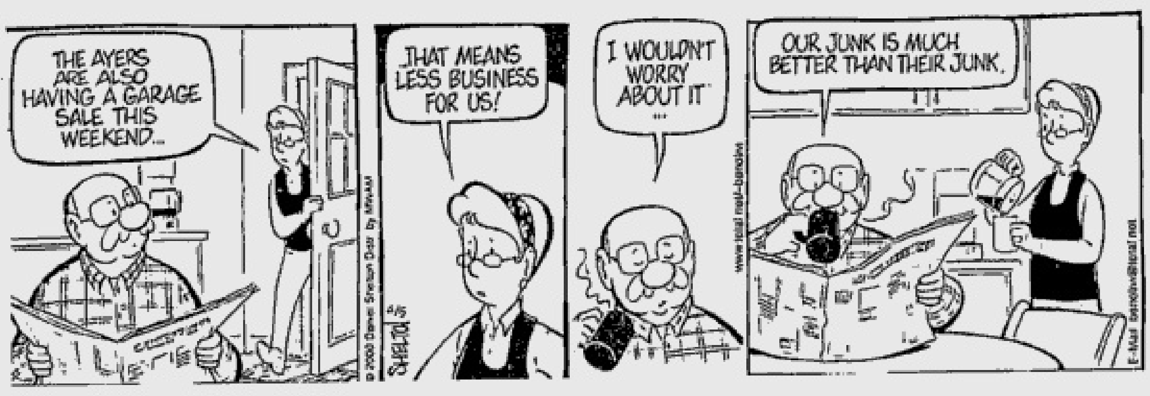
SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


MAM PWEDE BANG MAKAHINGI NG MGA LUMANG DAMIT MO!
PASENSYA KA NA!
PURO BAGO ANG MGA DAMIT KO!

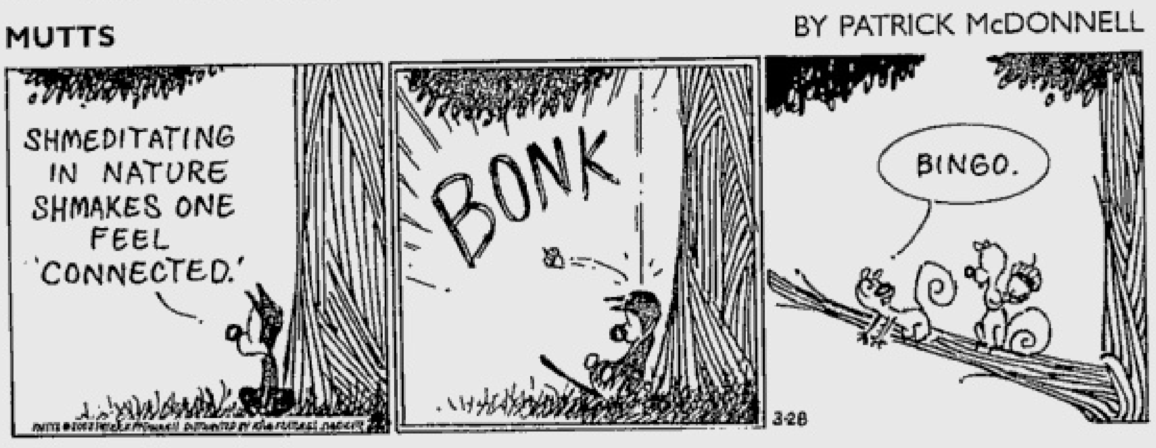
CHICHOY CHOKOY BY IKOY RICIO


BOO!! HULI KA!
ITUTUMBONG KITA KAY NANAY! ♫ ITUTUMBONG KITA KAY NANAY! ♫
TAYA!!
PARANG MALI?

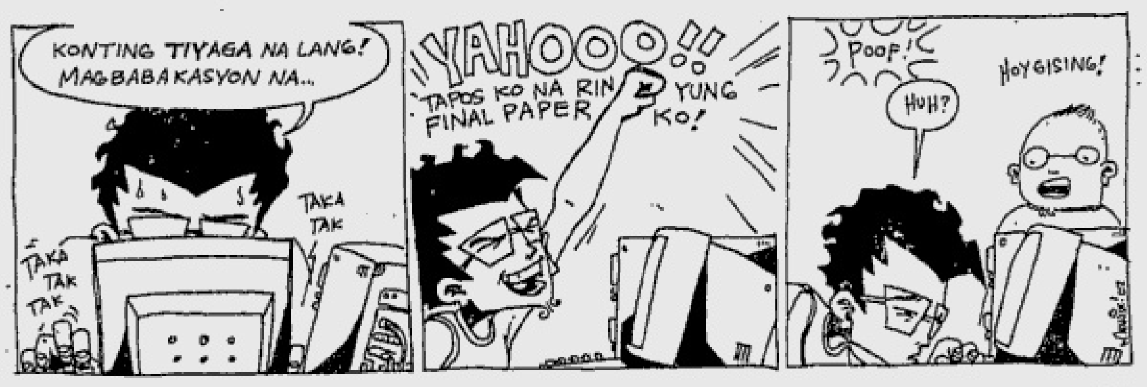
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


THE AYERS ARE ALSO HAVING A GARAGE SALE THIS WEEKEND...
THAT MEANS LESS BUSINESS FOR US!
I WOULDN'T WORRY ABOUT IT ...
OUR JUNK IS MUCH BETTER THAN THEIR JUNK.

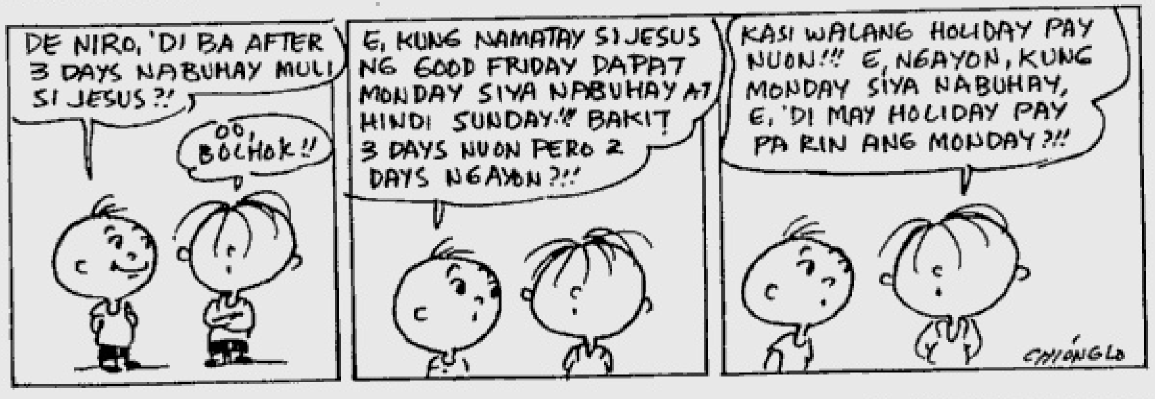
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SHMEDITATING IN NATURE SHMAKES ONE FEEL 'CONNECTED.'
BONK
BINGO.
3-28

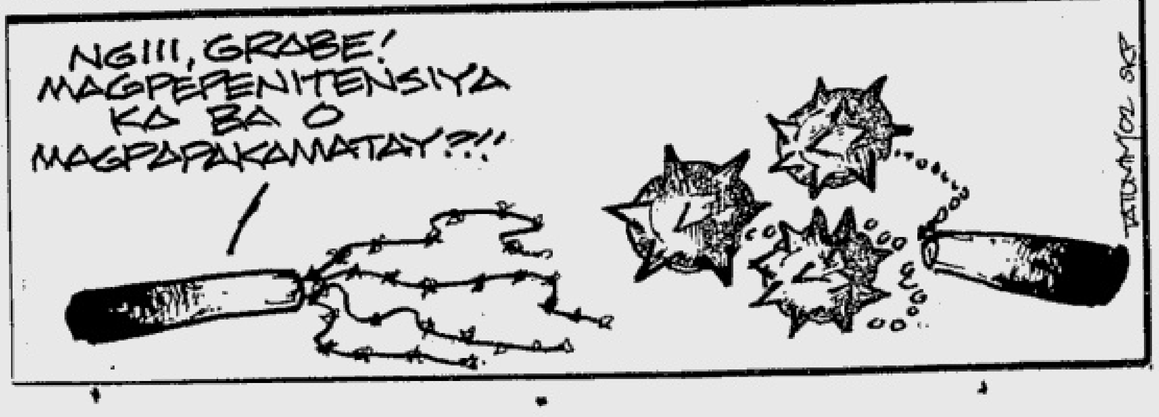
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


KONTING TIYAGA NA LANG! MAGBABAKASYON NA...
TAKA TAK
TAKA TAK TAK
YAHOOO!!
TAPOS KO NA RIN YUNG FINAL PAPER KO!
POOF!
HUH?
HOY GISING!

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


DE NIRO, 'DI BA AFTER 3 DAYS NABUHAY MULI SI JESUS?!
OO, BOCHOK!!
E, KUNG NAMATAY SI JESUS NG GOOD FRIDAY DAPAT MONDAY SIYA NABUHAY AT HINDI SUNDAY!! BAKIT 3 DAYS NUON PERO 2 DAYS NGAYON?!!
KASI WALANG HOLIDAY PAY NUON!!! E, NGAYON, KUNG MONDAY SIYA NABUHAY, E, 'DI MAY HOLIDAY PAY PA RIN ANG MONDAY?!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NGIII, GRABE! MAGPEPENITENSIYA KA BA O MAGPAPAKAMATAY?!!

Brownies, cookies and other goodies to live for beyond Easter

HAVE you ever wondered why eggs have been thought of as a symbol of Easter celebration? Well, stories say that to the early Christians, the egg was a symbol of continuing life and resurrection and was felt to be the most appropriate part of Eastertide celebration.

CRISPY Egg

For this season of Easter, the San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center has come up with recipes for cookies to make into a cookie bouquet or a rich melt-in-your-mouth brownie, which can be considered as an Easter egg hunt find. To add to the treat is an "eggstra"-easy egg recipe for the Easter family reunion.

For more recipe ideas, visit www.sanmiguelculinary.com or send a self-addressed stamped envelope to San Miguel Culinary Center, Legazpi corner Eagle Streets, Barrio Ugong, Pasig City.

Easter Roll-out Cookies

1 c Baker's Best Margarine
1 c sugar
1 pc egg
1 tsp vanilla
2 tsp baking powder
3 c all-purpose flour
¼ tsp salt

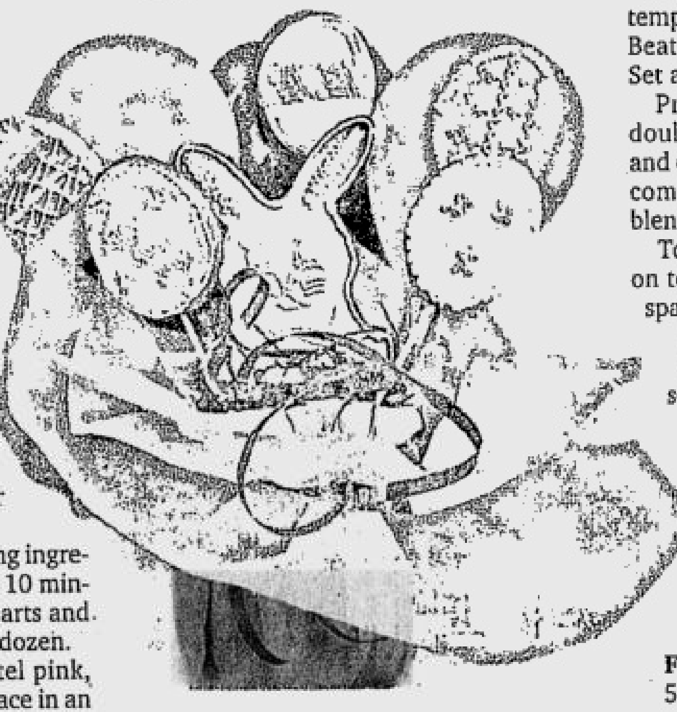
Royal Icing:
3½ c sifted powdered sugar
1/3 c egg whites
½ tsp cream of tartar

Preheat oven to 400ºF. In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar at medium speed for 7-10 minutes. Beat in egg and vanilla. Mix flour, baking powder and salt. Add flour mixture one cup at a time to the butter mixture. The dough will be very stiff. Blend last flour in by hand. Roll out dough on a cookie sheet and using a cookie cutter or a paper pattern, cut egg shapes. Insert barbecue stick carefully on each cookie. Bake for 6 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack and let cool.

For the Royal Icing, combine all icing ingredients and beat at medium speed for 10 minutes. Divide icing into two or three parts and tint each with pastel colors. Yield: 1 dozen.

To decorate: Tint icing with pastel pink, blue, yellow and violet icing color. Place in an icing bag. Outline the cookies using round small tip. For the ruffles and zigzag, use small star tip. Let it dry for half a day.

To assemble cookie bouquet: Fill pot or any container you want to use with brown sugar or Styrofoam. Wrap in decorative/colored paper. Stick in the cookies and decorate with colored balloons.


EASTER Roll-out Cookies

Two-Layer Brownies

8 oz (240 gm) semisweet chocolate block, chopped
¾ c Magnolia butter
1 tsp coffee (dissolved in 1 tbsp hot water)
4 large eggs
1 c + 3 tbsp sugar
1 c all-purpose flour
½ tsp salt
2 tsp vanilla
1 c coarsely chopped walnuts

Second layer:
225 gm Magnolia Cream Cheese, softened
¼ c + 2 tbsp Magnolia butter, softened
1½ c confectioners' sugar
1 tsp vanilla

Glaze:
180 gm semisweet chocolate block, chopped
2 tbsp Magnolia butter
2 tsp coffee
½ c cream

Preheat oven to 350ºF and line and grease a 9 x 3 x 2" pan.

Put chocolates in a double boiler and melt. Add butter and cream and blend well until smooth. Set aside to cool. Beat eggs at high speed until foamy, add sugar while continually beating, and beat until eggs turn lemon colored. Combine flour and salt and blend into egg alternately with cooled chocolate mixture. Add vanilla. Lastly, fold in walnuts, and pour into prepared pan and bake for 30-35 minutes or until a cake tester comes out clean. Cool completely, remove from pan and set into a rectangular tray.

Let cream cheese and butter stand at room temperature for about 30 minutes to soften. Beat together and add confectioners' sugar. Set aside.

Prepare glaze by putting together, in a double boiler, chocolate, coffee and butter and cook over medium heat until chocolate is completely dissolved. Whisk in cream and blend well. Let cool.

To assemble: Spread cream cheese mixture on top of brownies. Even out the top with a spatula. Spread glaze on top and even out as well. Refrigerate and cut when cold, but let it stand at room temperature before serving.

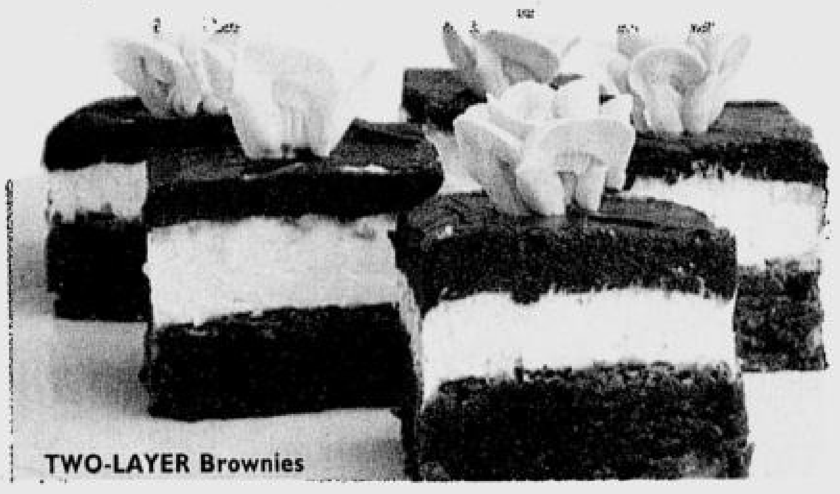
Makes 32 bars of approximately 1½ x 1½" slice.

Crispy Eggs

Wonton Basket:
24 pc wonton wrappers
2 tbsp Dari Creme, melted

Filling:
5 pc eggs
7 tbsp Magnolia butter
5 tbsp Purefoods Ham, finely chopped
1 tbsp chopped fresh parsley
1 tbsp cream
Salt and pepper to taste
¼ c grated Magnolia Quickmelt

Preheat oven at 375ºF. Brush wonton wrappers with melted butter. Place 2 pieces wonton wrapper at angles in one hole of a muffin pan. Bake for 7-10 minutes until golden brown. For the filling, beat eggs in a bowl until combined. Heat butter in pan, add eggs, stir gently until it begins to set. Remove from heat and stir in the ham, parsley and cream. Just before serving, spoon mixture into the wonton baskets and sprinkle with grated Quickmelt cheese then heat in the oven till cheese melts. Serves 12.


TWO-LAYER Brownies

TASTEMAKERS

PARTNERS behind "Flavors of Spain," the Spanish food festival held recently at the Hyatt Regency's Café Alfresco during the festival's opening, included (l-r) Farid Schoucair, Hyatt general manager; Eve Cayaban, Princess Cruises Philippines president; Aranzansa Bañon of the Spanish embassy; Mexican Ambassador Enrique Hubbard; Anna Regillo of the Instituto Cervantes; and Abel Nolasco, Hyatt F&B executive assistant manager. British Airways and Princess Cruises flew in Chef Martinez from the Hyatt Regency in La Manga, Cartagena, Murcia for a taste of authentic Spanish dishes, which Princess Cruises passengers will likewise be able to enjoy in Barcelona, the home port of the 109,000-ton Golden Princess.

TEA AND COMPANY
The French Baker general manager Johnlu Koa (center) introduced St. Dalfour Organic tea at "The Pleasures of the Table," which jointly launched the organic tea line with exquisite tableware collections Frivole, Bois de Rose and Galerie Royale of Bernardaud, France at Deco Centrum in Annapolis, Greenhills. Among the guests were (L-R) Gigi Mabanta, Marilou Peña-Koa, Angel Aquino and Mitos Juarez. St. Dalfour Organic teas are available at all French Baker outlets in Metro Manila, Pampanga and Metro Cebu.

MEET AND GREET
Chef Andrew Tan Chua, US-trained creator of Greenwich's new pasta sensations, recently came out of his kitchen to meet the public at the pizza outlet in Robinsons Place, Ermita. Photo shows Chef Andrew with (from left) the Greenwich Team: marketing manager for products Luis Velasco, R&D manager Susanne Cruz, marketing director Cherry Caluya and marketing manager for PR Cleng dela Paz.

How about regulating optical retail shops?

THE CONSUMER

Marietta Velasco Giron

CONTACT lens users in this country should get together and pressure the health and industry departments to regulate, once and for all, widespread malpractice in optical shops, specifically in the sale of contact lenses and related products.

Overpricing is bad enough but it's even worst that salesclerks and non-professionals are allowed to prescribe lenses, switch brands, withhold information and recommend products of their choice.

Hazel Irene S. Intia of e-mail address hazel_intia@hotmail.com related to us her unpleasant experiences to alert unwary consumers. She said her first pair of lenses—a Durasoft "extended/clear"—turned out to be a disappointment. Not only were the lenses uncomfortable but they were difficult to put on. Moreover, they often folded up inside the eyes. She found out from an ophthalmologist that the lenses were too big for her. Not surprisingly, one of the lenses was blown away one windy day.

She had to buy another pair, this time in another shop. The lenses, "a pair of daily, clear, Bausch and Lomb" were a perfect fit. She thought all was well all the years she had patronized the optic shop until she discovered that she had been paying exorbitantly for her purchases.

Intia complained, "The items were atrociously overpriced! Lens cleaner, solutions, protein removers were P20 to P50 more than those sold by other stores, while the lenses were P200-400 more!"

She surveyed other optic shops at shopping malls and here are her findings: Price of clear, daily Durasoft lenses ranged from P1,100 and P1,200 to P1,800. "Clerks have no qualms to tell other customers to switch to another brand, or change into disposable lenses with color to boot. What's more, they quote exorbitant prices expecting the customers to haggle. One saleslady even asked me, *'Magkano ba ang gusto mo?'* "

Letters from consumers

Query from Ruben.Balejo@elpaso.com: "Do we have a bill of consumers' rights (a consumers' law)? Where can I get a copy if we have one."

Rita L. Aventido of rela@edsamail.com.ph wrote: "I am writing my thesis on consumerism in the Philippines. Where can I get a copy of the consumer protection act? Please refer me to a consumer protection lawyer whom I can interview."

Please see the new web page of the Department of Trade and Industry to get answers to consumer questions. Ms Aventido can interview lawyer Zenaida Reyes who was one of those who prepared the draft of the consumer act of the Philippines. We'll send Aventido the telephone number of lawyer Reyes by e-mail.

DTI web page for consumers

Consumers from all over can now send inquiries, views and complaints directly to the Department of Trade and Industry through its web page www.e-reklamo.net.ph

Features of the web page are:

- Consumer information—rights and responsibilities of consumers, filing complaints, reports on complaints that have been resolved
- Consumer welfare desk—information about functions of this service
- Price Monitor
- Consumer Protection Laws
- Consumer Net—directory of consumer-related government agencies and information about frequently asked consumer questions
- News and Events

The consumer web page also features a message board where a consumer can get answers to questions or find a list of consumer-oriented agencies and organizations.

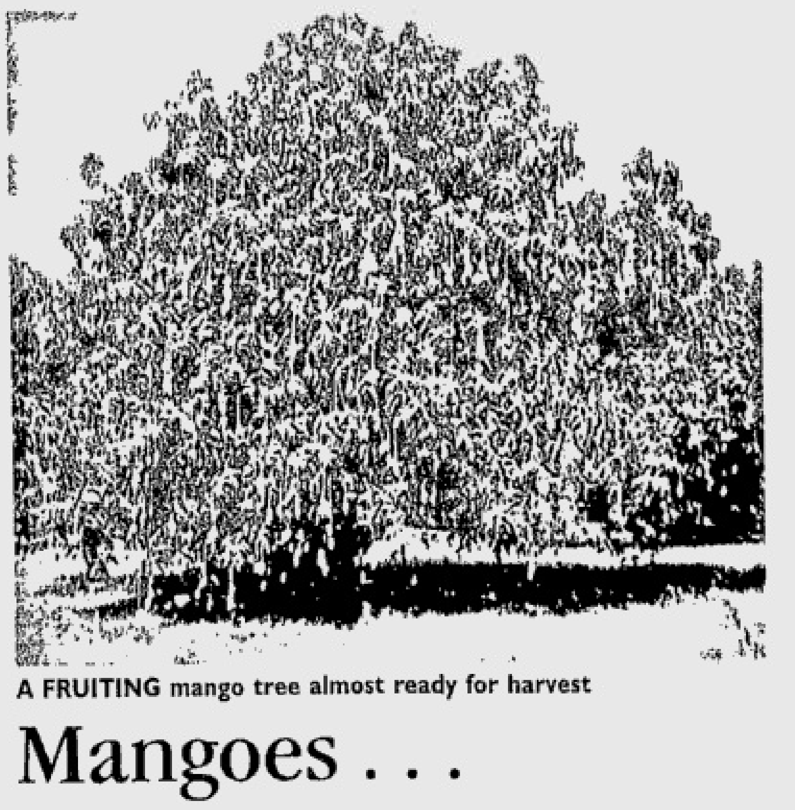
Praises!

Calling the attention of the big boss of The Optical Shop in Ali Mall. Here is a commendation from satisfied customer Virginia G of Philippine Textile Research Institute: "Sales personnel Ethel Alban deserves a commendation from her CEO for her prompt response to customer's complaint. She handled my complaint efficiently about a pair of contact lenses that needed to be replaced."

Also deserving commendations from their chief executive officers for handling customer complaints efficiently are Rowena Dayag and Ofelia Cruz of Destiny Cable. By the way, for inquiries on how to pay subscriber's bills and take advantage of the current promotional offers for advanced payment of one year or six months subscriptions, call Cruz at 841-9339 or e-mail ocruz@destiny.sen.com.ph

We personally sing the praises for technical support assistant Ruel Peneranda of Cyberspace for having the patience to explain to us the complexities of changing codes and rearranging the features of our e-mail.

E-mail the author at mgiron@csi.com.ph


A FRUITING mango tree almost ready for harvest

Mangoes . . .

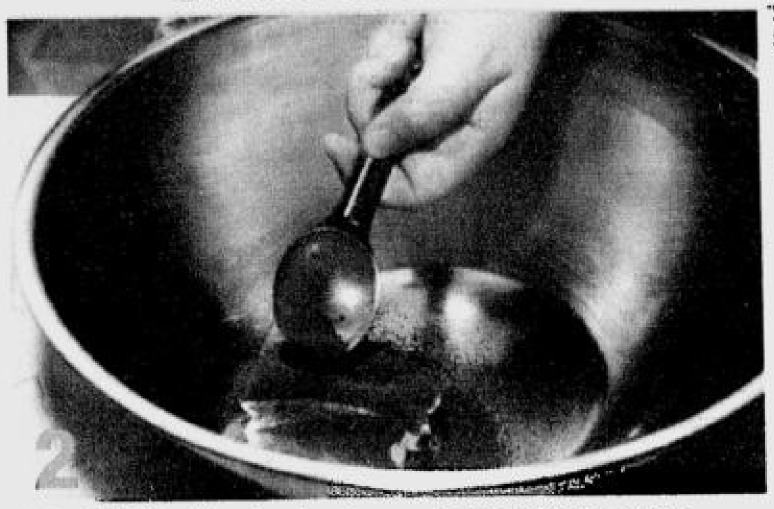
From page C1

On its own, it is a personality, tart and lip-puckering. Often pickled or preserved in brine, it is now found in pasta sauces as an olive substitute. Most recently I have savored it in a crisp and delicious salad created by Beth Romualdez, chef and cooking teacher: tiny *paho* slices with fine-sliced tomatoes, onions, young garlic (*murang bawang*) and a sprinkling of rock salt, or if you wish, a liquid *bagoong* (e.g. Balayan, *heko* or *guinamus*).

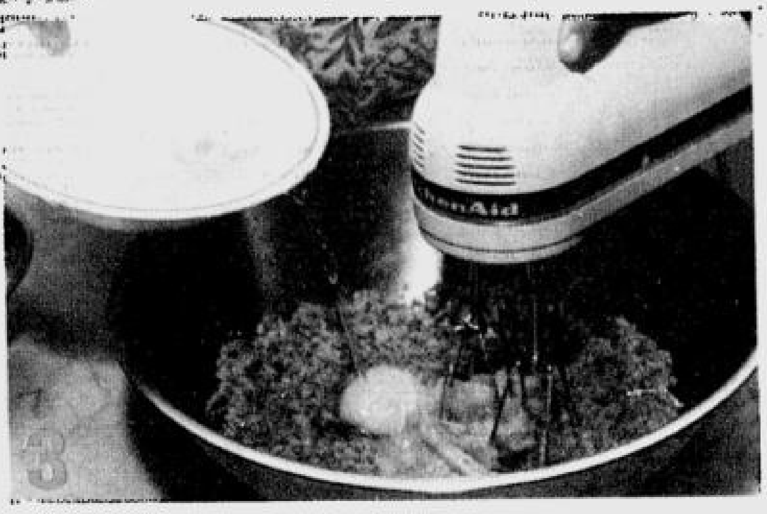
We are not the only mango growers in the world. There are as well India, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Mexico and, in the US, Hawaii and Florida. But I venture to say that we are among the happiest, growing mangoes now all year round (with special mention of Zambales, Guimaras and Cebu); discerning the virtues of and differences between the large fleshy *kalabaw* and the leaner *piko*, as well as, when available, the white *baluno* known to the Manobos, or the mango-apple. The mango is part of our culture: notice such place names as Dumangas, Maypajo and Kamanggahan.

When Westerners compare it to "nectarines, peaches and apricots," we just smile, knowing that as a vain attempt to capture the essence that we know in our tongues and in our memories.

PREHEAT the oven to 350°F. Line a 7x11" rectangular baking pan with a sheet of Glad foil. Set aside. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, salt and baking powder. Mix well with a spoon and set aside.



IN A LARGE mixing bowl, using an electric mixer beat the butter together with the coffee powder until light and fluffy. Add the sugar and beat for five minutes to partially dissolve the sugar granules.



ADD the eggs and beat until blended.

Coffee, tea and biscotti

By Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

STEP-BY-STEP

BISCOTTI are a perfect accompaniment to a good cup of coffee or tea. But, even without the hot beverage, biscotti are such ideal snack anytime of the day.

Biscotti, the Italian version of our local *biscocho*, are actually baked twice for a crisp, nice texture. The cookies are cut into strips. More often than not, slivers of nuts—almond, walnut, cashew, macadamia and what-have-you—are mixed into the batter for added crunch.

Culinary expert Dorothy Ferreira demonstrates the basic procedure of making mocha biscotti. Here, she makes use of instant coffee, butter, caster sugar and flour. But, if you crave for the chocolate version, omit the coffee and instead use 60 g or 2 oz of melted unsweetened baking chocolate to the butter.

Dorothy says the traditional biscotti recipe requires a lot of kneading before the dough is formed into a log, baked and re-baked. But she prefers the nontraditional formula wherein the kneading is omitted, but the taste is just as good. Biscotti are not complicated to make; expect no mistake if you follow the procedure carefully.

For an extra-special touch, melt bittersweet chocolate over low heat till it melts. Dip half of one side of the biscotti for a sophisticated look.

Dorothy Ferreira regularly holds cooking classes at 48 Third St., New Manila, QC. Call 721-7735 or e-mail dorothyferreira@skyinet.net.

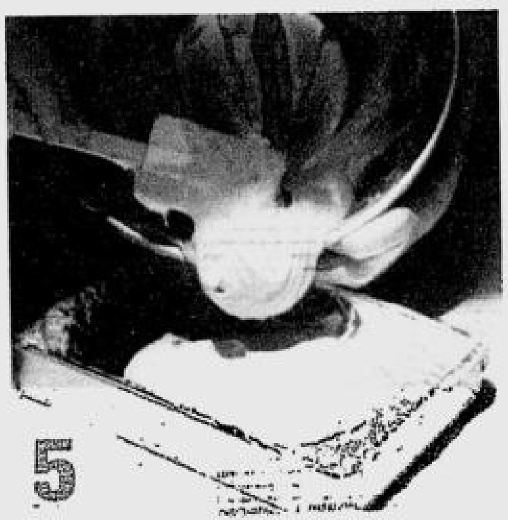
SERVE freshly baked biscotti with a cup of brewed coffee.

Ingredients:
1¾ c sifted all-purpose flour
¼ tsp fine salt
½ tsp sifted baking powder
½ c Magnolia butter
2 tbsp Nescafe Classic Instant Coffee
1-½ c Peotraco Caster Sugar
4 whole eggs, graded extra large

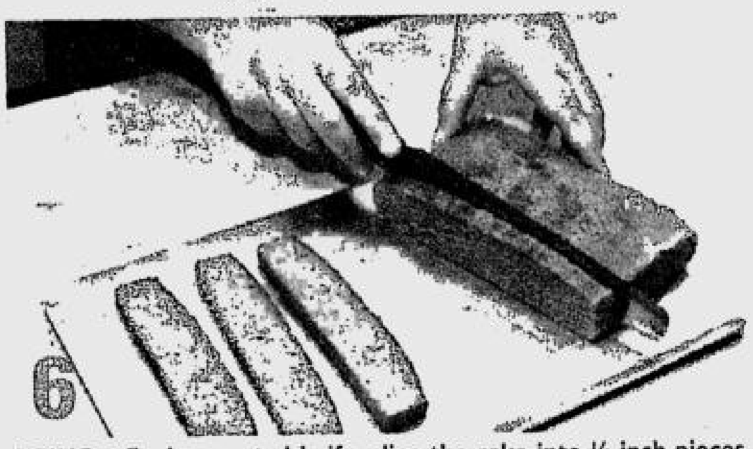
Glaze (optional):
100 g melted Selbourne bittersweet chocolate

For suggestions, e-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

ADD the flour mixture and continue to beat at low speed until no trace of flour is visible.



POUR the batter into the prepared baking pan and level with a spatula. Bake for 40-45 minutes or until a toothpick or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Allow to cool completely. It is best to refrigerate the cake overnight before slicing for a clean finish.



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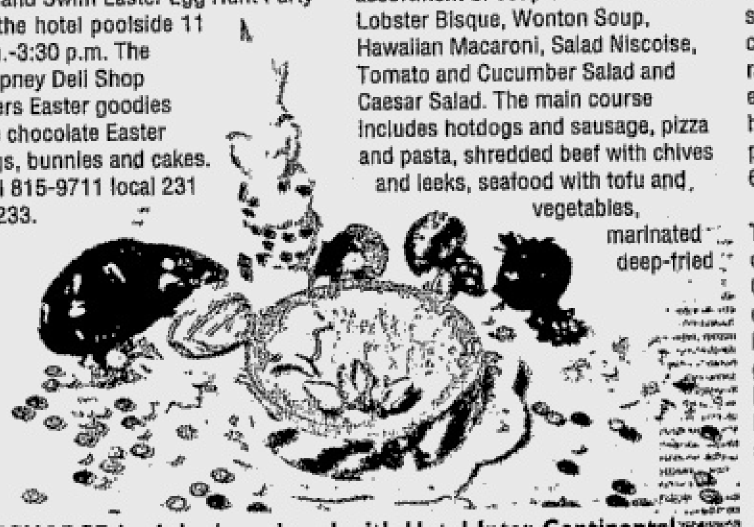

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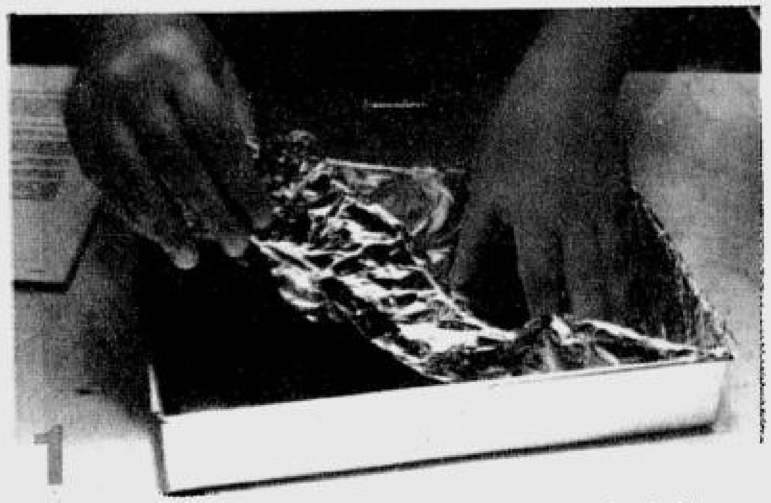
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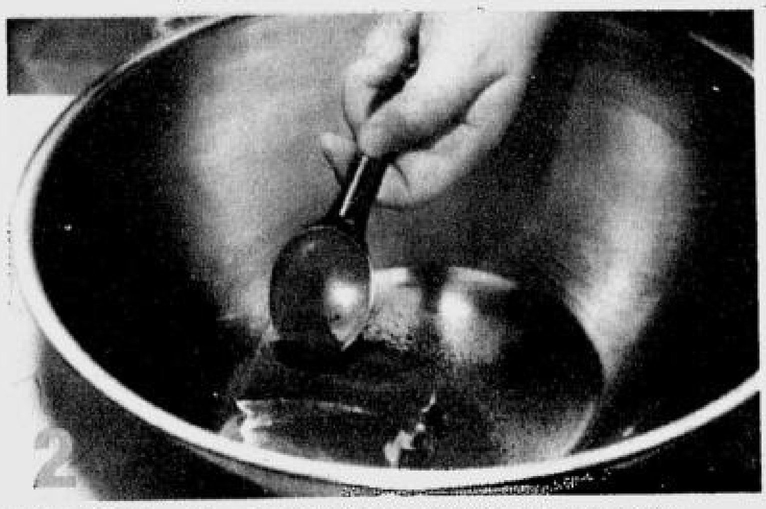
PREHEAT the oven to 350°F. Line a 7x11" rectangular baking pan with a sheet of Glad foil. Set aside. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, salt and baking powder. Mix well with a spoon and set aside.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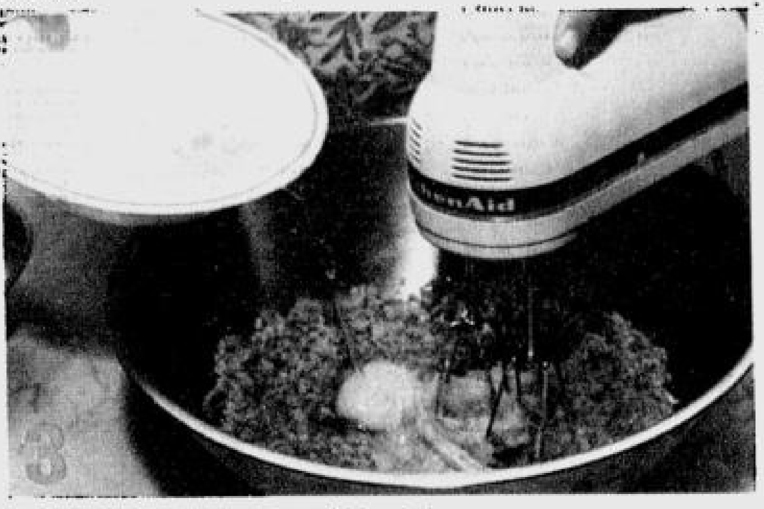
IN A LARGE mixing bowl, using an electric mixer beat the butter together with the coffee powder until light and fluffy. Add the sugar and beat for five minutes to partially dissolve the sugar granules.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ADD the eggs and beat until blended.

Coffee, tea and biscotti

By Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Roger Carpio

STEP-BY-STEP

BISCOTTI are a perfect accompaniment to a good cup of coffee or tea. But, even without the hot beverage, biscotti are such ideal snack anytime of the day.

Biscotti, the Italian version of our local *biscocho*, are actually baked twice for a crisp, nice texture. The cookies are cut into strips. More often than not, slivers of nuts—almond, walnut, cashew, macadamia and what-have-you—are mixed into the batter for added crunch.

Culinary expert Dorothy Ferreira demonstrates the basic procedure of making mocha biscotti. Here, she makes use of instant coffee, butter, caster sugar and flour. But, if you crave for the chocolate version, omit the coffee and instead use 60 g or 2 oz of melted unsweetened baking chocolate to the butter.

Dorothy says the traditional biscotti recipe requires a lot of kneading before the dough is formed into a log, baked and re-baked. But she prefers the nontraditional formula wherein the kneading is omitted, but the taste is just as good. Biscotti are not complicated to make; expect no mistake if you follow the procedure carefully.

For an extra-special touch, melt bittersweet chocolate over low heat till it melts. Dip half of one side of the biscotti for a sophisticated look.

SERVE freshly baked biscotti with a cup of brewed coffee.

Dorothy Ferreira regularly holds cooking classes at 48 Third St., New Manila, QC. Call 721-7735 or e-mail dorothyferreira@skyinet.net.

Ingredients:
1¾ c sifted all-purpose flour
¼ tsp fine salt
½ tsp sifted baking powder
½ c Magnolia butter
2 tbsp Nescafe Classic Instant Coffee
1 ½ c Peotraco Caster Sugar
4 whole eggs, graded extra large

Glaze (optional):
100 g melted Selbourne bittersweet chocolate

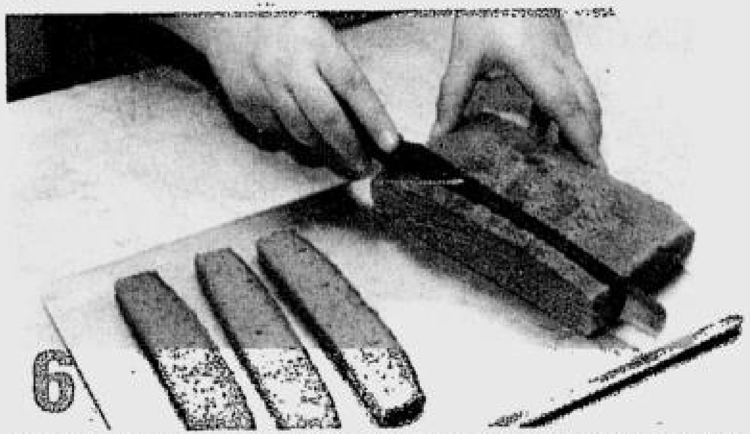
For suggestions, e-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

4

ADD the flour mixture and continue to beat at low speed until no trace of flour is visible.

5

POUR the batter into the prepared baking pan and level with a spatula. Bake for 40-45 minutes or until a toothpick or cake tester inserted in the center comes out clean. Allow to cool completely. It is best to refrigerate the cake overnight before slicing for a clean finish.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